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ecently I was at the *Cuisine* stand at The Food Show Auckland where I met many of you, our lovely readers, as well as many other people who were interested in the magazine. When I am chatting to potential subscribers at events like this, I am sometimes asked whether our recipes are healthy. My immediate response is, "of course!"

I think getting hold of decent ingredients and cooking from scratch is the healthiest thing you can do. Sure, we also feature delicious desserts and baking in the magazine, and I am not claiming they are "healthy", but they are made with identifiable ingredients (no mystifying numbers), so you know exactly what you are eating. And sensible eating comes down to acknowledging that treats, like most things, should be enjoyed in moderation.

Fad diets (and there are always plenty around!) come and go, but flavoursome, nutritious home-cooked food (be it new and innovative or just plain comforting) does not. In fact, one of the biggest reader reactions we had this year was in reponse to Lucy Corry's Last Bite (issue 169), when she revealed that she was proud to be a regular homecook who used butter and sugar, and didn't run screaming from carbs. She said she would not be made to feel guilty about it either! Unsurprisingly, this resounded with many of you, who know that *Cuisine* celebrates food, rather than creating guilt, stress or obsessions around what we eat.

So enjoy this issue's great recipes, including our sublime cover dish of salmon in a fragrant Asian broth (one of my favourites), a fabulous colourful salad with new-season asparagus, or satisfying roast lamb with pea puree. It's all real food to make you feel really good. Happy cooking.

The Cuisine team at the Cuisine Good Food Awards 2015, from left: Fiona Lascelles, Angela Earl, Sarah Nicholson, Amy Stewart, Fiona Smith, Ginny Grant & Sarah Wall





SEPTEMBER 2015

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PEOPLE IN THE ISSUE



SIMON DAY
Writer

Auckland journalist Simon Day has always been enchanted by fridges and what they say about their owners, from cold spaghetti in the fridge of a Dunedin flat to meticulously labelled leftovers stacked high in an urban dwelling. "Your fridge is an incredibly intimate cultural and social window," he says. When he's not peering

into refrigerators and mentally noting his findings, Simon writes for the *Sunday Star-Times* and magazines throughout the country. Things you will always find in Simon's fridge are Best Foods mayonnaise, celery (he likes it smeared with peanut butter as an afternoon snack) and homemade hot sauce starring his mum's chillies. He expands on his fridge musings in this issue's Last Bite (page 178).



GRETA VAN DER STAR Stylist & photographer

Greta van der Star has worked as a stylist for the past seven years or so, though she also dabbles in photography, events and magazine production – it's fair to say life is busy. She's one-third of the team behind the *The Perodic* journal (theperiodic.co.nz), photographing the images for the seasonal publication that celebrates

locality in Auckland, and says watching the city change over the last few years has been inspiring. "There's definitely a good movement towards design and creative things." Greta styled this issue's Saving Grace dinner party story (page 60) and is a keen cook in her spare time. "I love spending Sundays cooking for friends – at the moment I'm really into slow-cooked vegetarian chillies, with lots of smoky chipotles."



FIONA SMITH Food writer & stylist

Having written for *Cuisine* for the past 15 years, Fiona Smith knows a thing or two about food trends, and has riffed on everything from pickles to paella and sausage rolls to South American cuisine in her innovative features. For this issue, she's created a delicious yet budget-friendly dinner party (page 60), as well as interviewing

US chef Dan Barber (page 34). "He was amazing – really down to earth but also hugely inspiring." Fiona typically creates the compelling food for our cover shoots, including this issue, and regularly works as a food stylist on advertising shoots. In her spare time, she's been known to mould food from Fimo for a 100 Days Project and aspires to one day create a liquorice allsorts Transformer dress.



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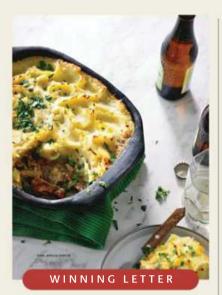
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I WASN'T GOING to buy *Cuisine* this month as I'm trying to change my eating habits and I wasn't sure there would be many recipes that I could make and enjoy. But last week, my partner came home and plonked Cuisine's July edition in my lap, explaining enthusiastically, "It's full of fantastic information about whole foods and slow cooking and there's even a section on alternative sugars." After reading your magazine from front to back, I agreed with my darling. The next day I dusted off the slow-cooker and have since cooked some of the most delicious meals I've ever made. "Buying you that Cuisine magazine was the best investment I've made in a long time," my partner said through the last mouthful of pork, apple and cider pie last night. I have to agree, it was. Tess Moeke-Maxwell

I dusted off the slowcooker and have since cooked some of the most delicious meals I've ever made

HAVING BEEN FINDING our way through the first few weeks of parenthood. I just wanted to say how great your magazine has been in recent weeks. After having a beautiful baby boy in April, I was given your May issue (170) by a friend. Not only have I enjoyed reading it during some essential downtime, but you have also provided inspiration for some delicious meals! My husband has enjoyed cooking many of your recipes, with standouts being the pork ragu and ginger kisses. Thank you so much for helping us to survive the incredible, but full-on, first few weeks of parenthood. Bronny Trewin

I WAS LUCKY to get my nose in the latest issue of *Cuisine* (171) as my lovely man spied the mag. "It's shiraz!" he said with great enthusiasm, then he was waylaid by the salted chocolate and caramel brownie tart (it was his birthday treat, and was sensational). But I wanted to thank Ginny Grant for the Flash in the Pan recipes. The hot and sour butternut red lentil soup had absolutely perfect flavours and has been added to my large folder of *Cuisine* favourites that we have been rolling out since issue 24. *Joy & Graeme Thomas*

I HAVE BEEN receiving a gift subscription of Cuisine magazine for a couple of years now and my children have always encouraged me to try new recipes. However, time is often pressing and I haven't tried as many recipes as I, or my children, would have liked. My nearly-20-year-old son decided he needed to do something about that and was really inspired by the July issue of the magazine. We thought, as a relatively inexperienced cook, he was being quite ambitious selecting the salted chocolate and caramel brownie tart, but how wrong we were. He produced a wonderful tart that tasted delicious and looked just like the picture. Thank you Cuisine for inspiring my son to cook - we are all looking forward to more delicious meals. S Ryan

In September 1990 I discovered Cuisine magazine and so began my 25 years of subscribing – I still have all my copies. I was almost 49 years old then and I am now 73 and still love to cook. Yes, I was considering saying goodbye more recently, but I enjoy Cuisine so much I am staying. New Zealand has come a long way food-wise over those years as we've embraced more cuisines from all over the world. Beryl Gibson **

Write to Cuisine at PO Box 6341, Wellesley St, Auckland 1141 or email editorial@cuisine.co.nz

All these letters were received by email. Due to space restrictions, they have all been abridged.

WINNING LETTER PRIZE

Congratulations to Tess Moeke-Maxwell, the author of our winning letter, who wins a set of WMF Chef's Edition knives worth \$599, including a 10cm utility knife, a 20cm chef's knife and a 20cm carving knife. All are super sharp, thanks to advanced blade technology, and feature ergonomically designed handles. Made in Germany, WMF knives will ensure you slice and dice like a professional.

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THE APP

You can now download *Cuisine* to your Apple or Android smartphone or tablet and read it (not to mention cook from it) offline. Search "Cuisine magazine" in the **App store**





Read about all the best restaurants, plus listings of local favourites around NZ in the *Cuisine* Good Food Guide 2015 e-zine. **cuisine.co.nz**



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NEWS +VIEWS

STREET SMARTS

Blue Frog breakfast cereals and Judge Bao buns are two big drawcards at Ponsonby's Street Food Collective. >









PHOTOGRAPHY, JASON CREAGHAN

NEWS+VIEWS

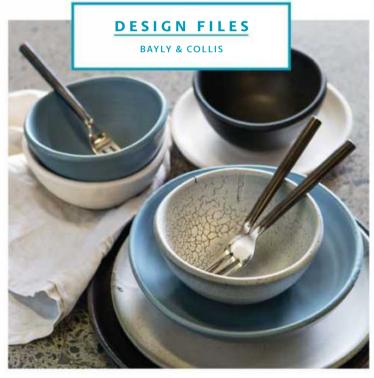
(FROM PREVIOUS PAGE)

fter 20 years working in research and development for Mars in Melbourne, Scotty Baragwanath, his wife and their four children decided it was time to return home to New Zealand.

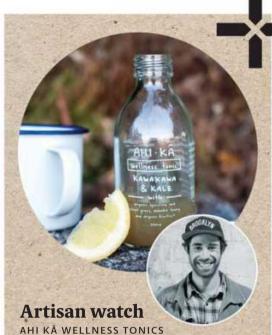
Scotty had always been a keen cook - "from croissants to onion soup, I love making things that take a lot of time and care" - and after brainstorming various business ideas, he decided the time was right to revolutionise breakfast. He launched Blue Frog Breakfast in March with a line-up of six cereals, though it's not your average granola. "I wanted to be quite disruptive around flavour combinations." The best-seller is the paleo-friendly Kaipara Kumara, which really does include kumara, mixed with spices and seeds and flavoured with Canadian maple syrup (Scotty was inspired by pumpkin pie), while other options combine the likes of espresso or cacao with grains.

As well as plying his wares at farmers' markets around Auckland, Scotty's been serving up breakfast at Ponsonby's Street Food Collective - a fantastic new space where a frequently changing line-up of vendors serve food and drink all day. Participants include The Lucky Taco and Flight Coffee, plus gourmet burgers, waffles, Korean tacos and many more. Scotty shares a production kitchen on the North Shore with the pair behind Judge Bao, who make excellent mod-Chinese buns (Black Betty delivers Chinese black vinegar-braised pork; Baabra-Ann cumin-braised lamb) and they're also regulars at the Collective.

"It's great meeting like-minded, passionate foodies and New Zealand's very collaborative; people want to help each other." Scotty has plenty more plans for the Blue Frog brand in the coming months, all focused on his master plan to shake up the breakfast experience. "I just really want to make different things." > bluefrogbreakfast. co.nz; thestreetfoodcollective.co.nz



Chef Ben Bayly (Baduzzi, The Grove) and potter Peter Collis have just released a beautiful (and affordable – pieces range from \$20 to \$40) collection of tableware that's available in Stevens stores throughout the country. After working as a judge on last year's *My Kitchen Rules*, Ben says he felt the contestants needed "better tools to showcase their food". Ben uses Peter Collis plates in his restaurants, so the collaboration seemed natural. "It was a bit of a labour of love," says Ben. "I like the idea of making things of quality, that you could pass down to your grandkids." The plates and bowls come in a number of different colours and glazes – look for them in Stevens stores and online. → stevens.co.nz



AHI KA WELLNESS TONICS

It's fair to say Tama Toki (above) fits more into his average day than most of us. He's studying law at Auckland University while also training six days a week for athletics - he won gold in the 400m at this year's NZ Championships and is hoping to make the squad for next year's Rio de Janeiro Olympics. Somehow, he also finds time to brew these "wellness tonics". Tama grew up on Great Barrier Island and his parents still live there. As a child, he recalls his kuia brewing kawakawa or kumarahou tea on the wood-fired stove in winter – both plants are key ingredients in traditional Maori medicine. Tama's Ahi Kā drinks (he makes a kawakawa and kale option as well as a kumarahou brew) are at once enjoyable, refreshing drinks (they're sweetened with Barrier manuka honey) and health-boosting tonics. His parents pick the kawakawa and kumarahou leaves for him on the island, and Tama brews the drinks in Auckland the same day. This is a renaissance man to watch. → ahikatonics.co.nz

PASTA PICK

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Coffee, chef?

Talented chef Josh Emett was recently named New Zealand's first Nespresso culinary ambassador, joining an esteemed group of chefs worldwide including Australia's Tetsuya Wakuda and Shannon Bennett. "Using only the best ingredients is very important to me as a chef, and Nespresso's committed to producing the world's top coffee," says Josh. "I visited some of their coffee plantations in Brazil last year and was hugely impressed their approach ties in perfectly with my own." Emett has created several breakfast recipes to celebrate his appointment, each designed to be matched with a Nespresso coffee. This egg dish would be perfect for a weekend brunch enjoy it accompanied by a cup of the fruity, flowery Grand Cru Rosabaya de Colombia. \rightarrow nespresso.com

ABOVE Harvesting coffee beans at one of Nespresso's Brazilian plantations; Josh Emett visited the plantations last year

CHORIZO, TOMATO & PAPRIKA EGG BAKE SERVES 2

1 tablespoon olive oil 80g chorizo, diced

1 small onion, finely diced
1 clove garlic, crushed
250g cherry tomatoes, halved
handful of chopped parsley, plus
extra to serve
1 cup canned cannellini beans, with liquid
2 free-range eggs
pinch of smoked paprika
crusty bread to serve

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat. Add the chorizo and fry, stirring, for 3 minutes, then add the onion and garlic and fry for another 5 minutes or until softened. Add the tomatoes and fry gently for a further 5 minutes or until they are soft and breaking up. Stir in the parsley and beans, along with a little liquid from the can (or use water). Season with sea salt. Transfer the mixture to an ovenproof dish and flatten gently, then crack the eggs on top. Bake in the oven for 8-10 minutes or until the eggs are cooked. Sprinkle with smoked paprika and parsley. Serve with crusty bread.



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CHURS TO THAT

he career path of young brewer Andrew Childs is unusual even by craft beer standards. Most New Zealand brewers held "regular" jobs before brewing – the local industry boasts former engineers, plant scientists, university professors, cheese retailers, IT guys and graphic designers, to name but a few. Childs managed to complete a law degree, be admitted to the bar and work as a policy analyst in the public sector, before discarding the suit for time behind a very different kind of bar, selling brewing supplies and eventually establishing his own brewing company in 2013. It is now his full-time profession. At six foot five he has been dubbed "The Beer Giraffe", and he chose the equally appropriate Behemoth as his brand name when he stepped up from home brewing to contract brewing. Childs produces his "bigger-tasting beers" at breweries around the country, including the Twisted Hop in Christchurch and Tuatara Brewery in Paraparaumu. One of his signature beers is Behemoth Chur! New Zealand Pale Ale (5.5 per cent), which won a gold medal in last year's Brewers Guild of New Zealand Beer Awards. Pouring a light amber, it's balanced and smooth with notes of citrus and sherbet before a firm, bitter finish. It's a hoppy but approachable ale that pairs well with this issue's claypot chicken with asparagus and oyster mushrooms (page 78). It highlights the ginger and garlic in the dish, while counterpointing the mushrooms' earthiness. And asparagus, so difficult to match to wine, plays nicely with pale ales. Chur! → facebook.com/BehemothBrewingCompany NEIL MILLER







>

We've seen a lot of hot sauces lately, but particularly like the new Frankton Heat Aotearoa – great packaging and a good level of heat. Brighten up breakfast by sprinkling it over eggs and avocado. franktonheat.co.nz



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SEER, HOT SAUCE & PEANUT BUTTER, JASON CREAGHAN

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WIN! Every issue, we enter all our subscribers into a draw to win a prize. Congratulations to Des Flynn of Auckland, who receives this fantastic Electrolux Masterpiece Collection Immersion Blender, worth \$249.95. With a titaniumcoated triple blade, a 700W motor and an anti-splash design, it's dishwasher-safe, has a pause stand to prevent mess, and also comes with a 1L mini chopper and twin whisk attachment. Visit electrolux.co.nz for more information about the chef-standard Masterpiece Collection. And to subscribe to go in the draw to win a great prize next issue, see page 31.





Spotlight on tamarindTamarind adds a distinctive sweet-sour piquancy to dishes (see pages 112 and 114). Available at Asian food stores and some supermarkets, it comes in three forms – whole semi-dried tamarind, solid blocks of dried pulp and a liquid concentrate. To use the semi-dried, remove the skin then cover with a similar amount of warm water and soak for at least 20 minutes to soften. Use your fingers to knead the fruit, then push through a sieve to remove the seeds. You can then use the resulting pulp in cooking. This is also the process for using the dried pulp – simply break off a small piece before soaking it. The concentrate is a little less fresh flavoured, but comes ready to use - I particularly like the Jeeny's brand, which is made in Malaysia. GINNY GRANT



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AUCKLAND

Miss Moonshine's is new to Ponsonby, describing itself as a "low'n'slow barbecue joint" and dishing up the likes of pulled pork, brisket and Orleans doughnuts (we particularly recommend the fried chicken). Open for lunch and dinner seven days a week, with plans to add breakfast before long.

Sticking with the Americana theme, **Ralph's** has opened on Dominion Rd, with a menu that offers delights such as burgers, macaroni and cheese topped with Cheeto crumbs, deep-fried jalapenos and curly fries. There's also Good George beer on tap.

Dreaming of summer evenings? Federal St's new **Glass Goose** has a rooftop bar to spend them on, plus a menu that runs from snacks such as white anchovy and smoked tomato on toast to large plates.

While the closure of Coffee Supreme's excellent Good One cafe was cause for much dismay, the silver lining is that the ever-fabulous **Little & Friday** has opened a Ponsonby branch in the premises.

HAWKE'S BAY

As we went to press, talented chef James Beck (ex-Hastings' Taste Cornucopia) was about to open a new restaurant, **Bistronomy**, in Napier.

NEW PLYMOUTH

Kin & Co is a stylish new food store, selling fruit and veg, good-quality meat (including the local Green Meadows beef) and a range of pantry essentials. There's also Supreme coffee and plenty of good things to go, from top baking to salads.

CHRISTCHURCH

Twenty Seven Steps is the new offering on New Regent St from the former owners of Akaroa's Little Bistro. It's big on local produce and wine, with "rustic European-inspired" dishes.

Delicatessen Sumner has opened on the old Club Bazaar site in the beachside suburb, selling fresh produce, ready-to-eat meals and deli essentials.

DUNEDIN

Madam Woo, the Josh Emett-owned Malaysian street-hawker-style eatery that kicked off in Queenstown and recently opened an outpost in Auckland's Takapuna, is slated to also open on Lower Stuart St in mid-September.

QUEENSTOWN

Stylish new bar **Little Blackwood** has opened on the site of the old Boiler Room on Steamer Wharf. It has a killer fitout thanks to furniture makers WRW & Co, a local wine list and good snacks.

Entries are now open for the *Cuisine* Artisan Awards 2016 – if you have a favourite artisan product, encourage its creator to enter! Visit cuisine.co.nz

Christchurch Art Gallery Foundation's fundraising dinner on 26 September will serve up a five-course meal by chef Peter Gordon, matched with North Canterbury wines. A work by UK artist Martin Creed, commissioned by the foundation, will be unveiled on the night. Tickets are limited, email together@christchurchartgallery.org.nz



It's been 20 years since Sue Fleischl (above) began her catering company at a stainless-steel bench in the living room of her rented Auckland house. In the years since, The Great Catering Company has served everything from boardroom lunches to food for birthdays, weddings and all kinds of parties in between. "Sarah Paykel's wedding put us on the map as wedding caterers, and it really just grew from there." Beginning her cooking career in London, Sue worked in the kitchen at The Savoy Hotel for two years. "It was great because I learnt that classic Escoffier cuisine." She then spent time working in restaurants in the UK, New Zealand and Australia, moving into catering while living in Sydney.

A big leap for The Great Catering Company came in 2012, when Sue took over the management of Abbeville – a homestead, barn and church in landscaped grounds near Auckland Airport (abbeville.co.nz). "It's one of my dear loves – my heart and soul have gone into that place." Over the two decades she's been in business, Sue says her clients have become far more knowledgeable about food. "People want to know every little detail – is it organic, how are you going to serve it and so on." She keeps up to date with trends by attending catering conferences in the US, and is excited about her new barbecue smoker that will be in use for this summer's functions. And she has no plans to slow down or retire. "I still love it – I don't have an exit strategy." → greatcatering.co.nz

SUE FLEISCHL, JASON CREAGHAN

OMG*

*GSM – fragrant violet and red berryfruit flavours with a voluptuous velvety texture.

Our elegant, voluptuous Grenache Shiraz Mourvèdre 2012 is proving to be a real mouthful. Having won a Gold Medal at the Sydney International Wine Competition, it was then awarded 92 points by acclaimed wine writer Bob Campbell MW and a further 93 points by Canada's leading wine writer, Natalie MacLean. Small wonder what is becoming fondly known as GSM, is now best described as OMG.



Experience the wines that made the Barossa great.

barossavalleyestate.com



Give spring cocktails a lift with new East Imperial Thai Ginger Ale. It uses real ginger and is low in sugar, resulting in a pleasingly dry, fresh-flavoured drink that's great on its own, though obviously that much better added to whisky or Pimm's. → eastimperial.com



Chef Ferran Adrià (pictured above centre) – the man behind Spain's elBulli, one of the world's top restaurants until it closed in 2011 – has turned his talents to beer-making. He's partnered with Estrella Damm to create Inedit Damm, a fruity, floral beer designed to work with fine-dining dishes, from bittersweet to spicy flavours. It's available in New Zealand at restaurants including Baduzzi, The Grove and Odettes.



ASYLUM SEEKERS

A desire to make bread the traditional way led Maurice Lees to study artisan breadmaking in the UK, but he realised he didn't have the knack for it. Instead, on his return to Whakatane, he built a wood-fired oven and enticed his friend. French-born and trained baker Laurent Eudes (left) to experiment with it. Together, they've launched Bread Asylum in the bakery Lees built. It features antique English windows, Parisian doors and a modern bread oven – the wood-fired one isn't so practical for breadmaking, though it's great for pizzas. Eudes has 35 years of baking experience and shapes the loaves by hand. Find the bread at local markets, including those in Rotorua and Ohope. 8 Pokerekere Rd, RD4, Whakatane, 021 085 74931 CHARMIAN SMITH



We like the stylish packaging of L'affare's new Brava blend – certified Fairtrade and organic, it has dark cocoa notes plus a slightly spicy finish. Available as whole beans or ground ready for espresso or plunger. laffare.co.nz





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PANFRIED SALMON WITH ASIAN BROTH

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes Cooking 20 minutes

2 stalks lemongrass
2 tablespoons peanut oil
4cm ginger, peeled, sliced
2 limes, zested then quartered
2 shallots, chopped
2 large mild chillies, thinly sliced
8 fresh shiitake mushrooms,
sliced

1 tablespoon sugar 1 litre good-quality fish stock

4 small bok choy, halved 4 boneless, skin-on fillets King salmon (about 180g each) 3 tablespoons fish sauce

1/2 cup coriander and/or Thai basil leaves

Peel the outer layers from the lemongrass and discard. Finely slice the tender middle.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat, then add the lemongrass, ginger, lime zest, shallots, half the chillies and mushrooms and fry gently for



5 minutes. Add the sugar and stock and heat to a steady simmer, then simmer for 10 minutes, adding the bok choy in the last 2 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat a frying pan over medium heat. Brush the salmon with the remaining oil then fry, skin-side down, for 3 minutes. Turn and fry for a further 3 minutes or until golden.

Season the broth to taste with the fish sauce, then divide among 4 heated soup bowls and top with the salmon and the fresh herbs. Serve with the lime wedges to squeeze over, and the extra chillies on the side to sprinkle over the broth. **FIONA SMITH**

Congratulations to Hippopotamus restaurant's chef Laurent Loudeac and assistant maitre d' Camille Furminieux – the pair's high tea menu won the recent Dilmah Real High Tea Global Challenge in Sri Lanka, beating 20 other teams from 13 countries. hippopotamus.co.nz



We're rather taken with this Stanley Coffee Box from Kokako – a handy retro-look lunchbox that comes with a 470ml vacuum flask, plus plenty of room for your coffee brewing gear and beans. The perfect companion for picnics. → kokako.co.nz



J Friend & Co has just released squeezable bottles of three of its best-selling honeys, making it much easier to drizzle the deliciousness onto toast, cheese, cakes and more. → nzartisanhoney.co.nz





What's your guilty food pleasure? Lindt dark chocolate - but I tell myself I'm doing it for the health benefits. What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten and where? We were in China visiting our makers. Hospitality is very important to the Chinese so we were taken to a very grand seafood restaurant. Surrounded by aquariums of every kind of live fish imaginable. we were told we had to choose the fish. Being polite Kiwis, we chose a very small, humble fish. Only when it was presented by the licensed puffer fish chef did we discover what we had ordered. Eating it was truly terrifying but worth it - our hosts now think we are super cool and super tough!

Are there any foods you detest or just can't bring yourself to eat? I am a very adventurous eater and so far tripe is the only thing that has defeated me - the smell was so disgusting I had to ask the waiter to take the plate away. If you had to eat only one culture's cuisine for the rest of your life, what would it be? Italian. It's the heart of my own home cooking and I wouldn't lose any of my staple ingredients - tomatoes, garlic, parsley and lemons. What's been your most embarrassing cooking moment? The Christmas Day I pulled a completely flat pavlova out of the oven and threw it on the floor in front of [husband] Wavne's entire family! What would you cook to impress a date? A few years ago, Wayne and I were given two pheasants. We roasted them stuffed with prunes, orange peel and pine nuts, and served them on couscous with a sauce drowning in wine. It was the most impressive, decadent meal we've ever made so I would try and recreate that. What's your top kitchen gadget? A knife sharpener – I don't do gadgets. What food did you detest as a child but love now? Whole, overcooked brussels sprouts are still disgusting. But finely sliced, sauteed in oil, garlic and parsley with pine nuts and ground pepper tossed through – I love them. If you were a vegetable, what would you be? Cos lettuce - elegant, timeless and understated, but always keen to get into some trouble! katesylvester.com





Diary Dates

SEPTEMBER

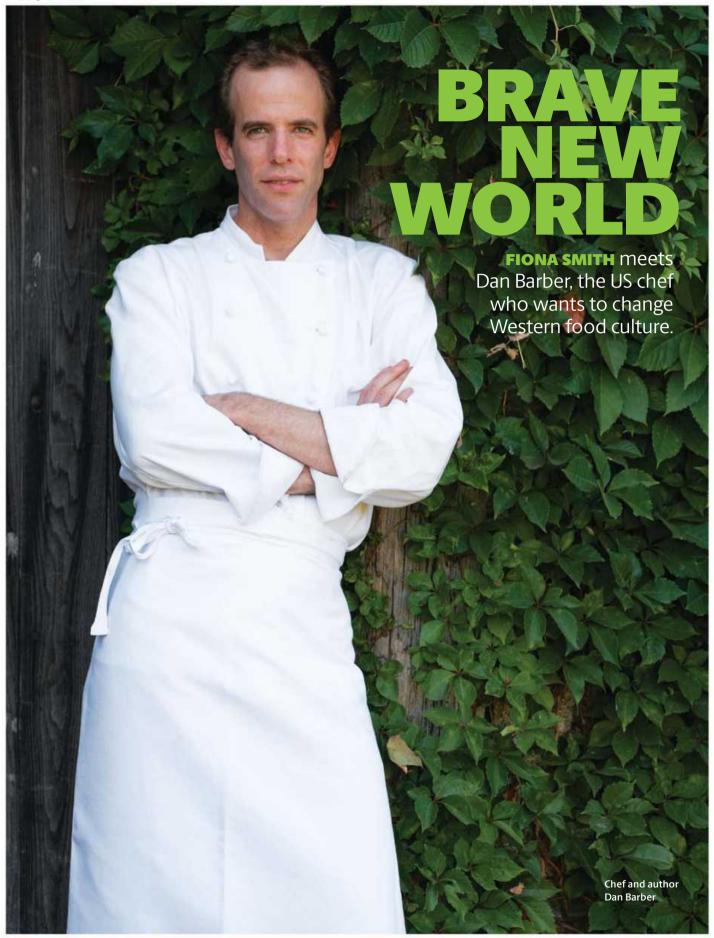
4-6 THE FOOD SHOW WELLINGTON Meet food producers from throughout the country, plus watch celeb chef cooking demonstrations. foodshow.co.nz 13-15 WINE & FOOD CELEBRATION Head to Auckland's New Zealand School of Food & Wine to attend masterclasses on everything from cooking to wine and coffee. foodandwine.co.nz 19 WHITIANGA SCALLOP FESTIVAL Take a trip to the Coromandel to eat your fill of scallops, plus check out numerous other food and wine stalls and demos by Ray McVinnie and the Bird sisters. scallopfestival.co.nz **26 THE BIG RED DINNER** Enjoy red wines from the Family of Twelve – a group of NZ's most respected artisan winemakers - with a five-course dinner by chef Paul Froggatt at Huka Lodge. hukalodge.co.nz **26 PORT CHALMERS SEAFOOD FESTIVAL** A celebration of kaimoana with cooking demos, music, a fishing competition and more. festival.portchalmers.com 27 CHRISTCHURCH VEGETARIAN EXPO Learn about all things vegetarian at CPIT's Student Association Building. vegetarianchristchurch.org.nz

OCTOBER

19-25 OKERE FALLS BEER FEST Drink beer, enjoy German-style food and listen to music all week long at this friendly cafe near Rotorua. okerefallsstore.co.nz

NOVEMBER

5-8 TASTE OF AUCKLAND Sample the best dishes from top Auckland restaurants at Western Springs, plus great wine and cooking demos. tasteofauckland.co.nz
6-15 SUMMER F.A.W.C! Usher in warmer weather with 10 days of innovative and delicious food and wine events in Hawke's Bay. fawc.co.nz
14 HAWKE'S BAY WINE AUCTION Held at the Hawke's Bay Opera House, you can purchase unique wine blends, chat to winemakers and support Cranford Hospice. hawkesbaywineauction.co.nz



"We need to stop skimming the cream... By choosing to cook diverse foods we can all connect with the landscape through a plate of food" – Dan Barber

t's a big call to say a book is life changing, but chef Dan Barber's The Third Plate: Field Notes on the Future of Food really can be. Barber was named one of the world's most influential people by *Time* magazine in 2009, and serves on US president Barack Obama's Council on Physical Fitness, Sports and Nutrition. He's the co-owner and executive chef of New York's Blue Hill restaurant. as well as Blue Hill at Stone Barns in New York state – the latter is part of the Stone Barns Centre for Food and Agriculture, which functions as a working farm and educational centre.

Clearly, Barber is a hugely powerful (not to mention busy) figure in the modern food world, so it's pleasantly surprising to discover that in person, he's friendly, engaging and down to earth. And while he's idealistic about his hopes for the future of the way we eat, he's also realistic about what home cooks can do.

Barber believes that by simply cooking at home, we're already doing a lot. "If you cook you're untangling yourself from depending on someone else cooking for you, [which is] always more complicated and not as tasty and probably not as good for you."

Barber spent 10 years researching The Third Plate, speaking to farmers and producers throughout the world about their practices, attempting to discover where we're going wrong with modern food production and consumption. In the book, he points out that the classic middle class Western meal in modern times has been a plate of meat with a few vegetables, moving into the "second plate" of the present, with free-range meat and farmers' market vegetables. While this second plate is a better proposition, Barber argues that it's still not sustainable in the long run.

His initial vision of the "third plate" was a carrot "steak", with a sauce of braised second cuts of beef. His point is not necessarily that we need to start eating vegetable steaks (though that wouldn't be a bad thing), but that we need to consider the broader relationships the foods we consume have with each other and the environment. "[It's] less a plate, per se, than a different way of cooking, or assembling a dish, or writing a menu, or sourcing ingredients - or really all these things," he writes. "It combines tastes not based on convention, but because they fit together to support the environment that produced them... it helps us recognise that what we eat is part of an integrated whole."

Barber was recently in Australia, speaking at the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival, and I asked him how we can start trying to adopt this approach. He suggests varying the grains you cook with as a good first step. Diversifying the grains we eat is important because it will stimulate demand for those different grains from farmers. Growing a rotation of crops is key to soil health, and soil health is the foundation of a sustainable agricultural system.

"Food is a process, a web of relationships, not an individual ingredient or commodity... Our job isn't to support the farmer; it's really to support the system that supports the farmer."

This isn't a new idea; it is the basis for many ancient food cultures. Barber gives the example of rice and soba noodles in Japanese cuisine. A cuisine heavy in rice needed a rotation of buckwheat to maintain soil fertility, so soba noodles were invented and became part of the culture.

"This stuff doesn't work unless it's in the culture. Nothing is more

important than creating a culture."

We spoke about our respective countries' lack of a real food culture in our modern way of eating (despite the fact that indigenous Americans and New Zealanders did both possess strong food cultures) and how this is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because we are largely free from prescription, but a curse because we don't have food patterns developed from a history of the best agricultural practices that keep the land fertile.

This leads to the difficult question: how do we start creating the right kind of food culture? While Barber wants to promote variety, simply cooking with different grains doesn't necessarily mean that the farms those grains come from will have diverse crops. "The problem with our food system, at least right now, is that if you are a barley farmer, you pretty much grow barley and wheat, and if you're a buckwheat farmer you grow buckwheat and clover or alfalfa or hay – you're essentially a mono culture."

However, he's hopeful that this will change. "In the face of weather that is less predictable and more unforgiving, a diversity of crops is one way for farmers to hedge their bets."

Our lack of a historical food culture also means we can readily adopt new ideas. Barber gives examples of sushi and Greek yoghurt as foods we have very quickly assimilated into our diets, so why not also a pattern of eating?

He feels his job is to get people excited about this new pattern; to move from nose-to-tail eating to nose to tail of the whole farm. The simple message is that you can make a change by adding diversity to what you cook. "We need to stop skimming the cream.... By choosing to cook diverse foods we can all connect with the landscape through a plate of food." *

CUISINE.CO.NZ / CUISINE / 35





THE WINNERS

The *Cuisine* NZ Good Food Awards 2015 recognised the country's best restaurants.

Chefs and restaurateurs from throughout New Zealand gathered at Auckland's St Matthew-in-the-City for an evening of good food, top wine and accolades at the Cuisine NZ Good Food Awards 2015, presented by Vittoria Coffee. Guests enjoyed Vittoria Coffee espresso martinis, wine from Negociants and non-alcoholic beverages from Sanpellegrino, while SkyCity catering served canapes starring Ora King salmon and charcuterie from Ghiotti by European Foods. Jeremy Corbett MC'd the evening, keeping the crowd entertained, and the prestigious title of Restaurant of the Year went to Lyttelton's Roots – a popular winner, judging by the resounding cheers. Visit cuisine.co.nz to download a pdf of the Cuisine Good Food Guide, with details of all the winners plus reviews of the country's best restaurants and Local Faves recommendations.





























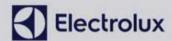


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Model EVEP618BA shown.



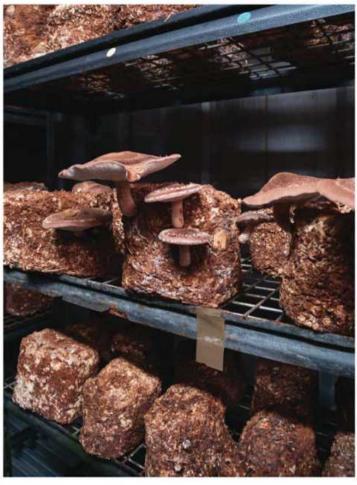
www.electrolux.co.nz





FROM THE SOURCE







"It's kind of the number 8 wire attitude. If you can do it, why not, and try to do it as well as possible."

This attitude is evident in his menu's innovative combinations – think sesame-crusted swordfish, squid mince and greenlip mussel congee, or crumbed lemonfish with coconut marinade and muttonbird crumble.

Rameka champions Hawke's Bay produce and has built up strong relationships with local suppliers over the nine-and-a-half years he's run Pacifica. One such supplier is Bruce Mackinnon of Hillcroft Mushrooms. Rameka was "pretty much" his first customer, says the commercial-fisherman-turned-fungus-fanatic, and "he's always been loyal to us".

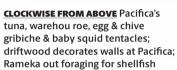
The business has expanded over the years and Mackinnon now supplies restaurants across Hawke's Bay, as well as Moore Wilson's in Wellington and Farro Fresh in Auckland. He mainly grows shiitake and oyster mushrooms, plus some enoki, in bags filled with straw inside converted shipping

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containers. He's also an expert forager and collects morels for Rameka in spring – the chef particularly likes them paired with John Dory and kina.

Rameka also likes to collect some of his ingredients himself – after our chat he was off to gather sea snails for a collaborative dinner at Pacifica with Auckland chef Michael Meredith.

Rameka has fond memories of hunting and gathering in Kakahi with his grandfather, whose eeling method entailed cutting the tops of his fingers to attract the eels – lured by the blood, they'd latch on to his fingers and he could pull them out of the water.

Another memory is of his grandfather's method of cooking kereru (wood pigeon – yes, illegal, naughty koro). "He moulded the whole pigeon in clay then put it on the fire. Then he'd open up the clay and it would take the feathers off and leave the meat. Some of the breast would still be raw and you'd eat it."

Rameka has had pigeon (not kereru, don't worry) on the menu at Pacifica, with the breast meat served raw, just as his grandfather used to do it. It's the melding of these early influences with those from his professional career that Rameka does particularly well.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Despite his food-focused childhood, becoming a chef was not on Rameka's radar as a youngster. He used to draw and play music, and thought about pursuing art as a career, but, "there was a lot of dreaming going on".

An artist's life wouldn't have suited him anyway, says Rameka. "If I'm not under pressure I'm pretty useless."

He quit school young and came and went for a few years before leaving the region permanently at about 19 or 20. "I just had to get out." He ended up working in kitchens, first in various spots around New Zealand and then in Melbourne and South Australia. "I think it's the artistic side of food that grabbed me."

Moving to Australia as a young man was his first experience of mixing with other cultures, he says, and learning about the cuisines of the people he worked with in kitchens – Vietnamese, Indian, Greek, Italian – had a big effect.

Rameka was overseas for a total of 11 years before coming home to New Zealand. He met his former wife, Rebecca, an aspiring winemaker from the States, on Hamilton Island, and they ended up in Hawke's Bay when she landed a job at Esk Valley.

Those early months in the Bay were tough – no one knew him, and he was frustrated with what he found. "I wasn't very happy with the food scene in New Zealand at that stage – I felt it hadn't moved. It was still the same stuff... When you go to other countries and you see a pizza, it's recognised as being from Italy. We don't have that in New Zealand. Well, I don't think we do."

Pacifica had already been going for about two-and-a-half years when Rameka took over from Napier-born Mark Sweet, who since selling Pacifica has become a writer and novelist. "I didn't have any money – it was a big risk," recalls Rameka.

There were, however, some serendipitous factors that convinced him to take the plunge. Sweet was related to New Zealand war artist Peter McIntyre, and McIntyre had close connections with Kakahi – he had a holiday home there and his paintings of the town and its inhabitants, including portraits of some of Rameka's relatives, were published in the 1972 book *Kakahi New Zealand*.

Thanks to that connection, Sweet had various Kakahi items decorating the restaurant – including a large flax weaving on the roof, still there today, that was made by one of Rameka's aunties. So it just seemed right. Plus, it "was a means of keeping me in the country. If hadn't got the restaurant I'd be in Australia or the States."

That was in 2006. In the years that followed, Rameka and Pacifica gained a loyal following thanks to his clever, uniquely New Zealand food.

But a couple of years ago, times became tough. With up to six options per course on the a la carte menu plus nine-, 12- and 15-course tasting menus on offer, "The workload was huge. There was a lot of pressure."

Something of a masterstroke was last year's decision to make the restaurant degustation only. It's a risky move for any eatery, especially one in a regional centre, but it ended up being the restaurant's saviour.

Pacifica now offers two nightly five-course degustation menus – one seafood-focused and the other offering both meat and seafood. Rameka says he spent years trying to get away from the notion of Pacifica being a seafood restaurant, as he found it limiting – the kaimoana-only menu

was him finally giving in. "It worked though – we sell more seafood than we did before."

The new format has taken a weight off his shoulders, says Rameka. "Five courses is so much easier. You can concentrate more on the individual dishes." Crucially, each menu is just \$50, or \$100-\$110 with matching wines. It was important to Rameka that the price point be low.

"I went up to Auckland and talked to a few mates and they were going, 'What are you doing, \$50? Put the price up!' And I was going, 'No, no, no... you go do your thing, I'll do my thing'."

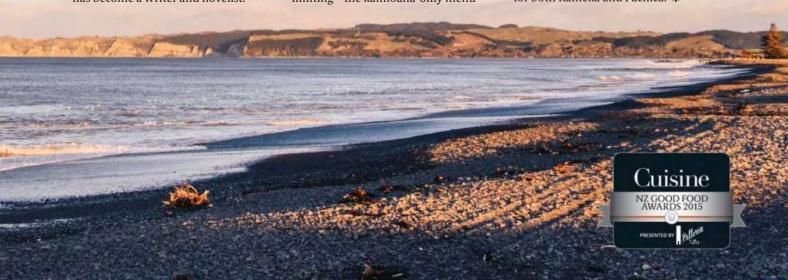
Keeping costs down isn't easy.
"I have to be quite smart about it."
Luckily he's always been a fan of the nose-to-tail approach, as well as using less popular cuts of meat and "the seafood that nobody wants".

On any one menu you might see corned beef, sweetbreads and brains alongside sea snails, kina and lemon fish (the fish-and-chip-shop favourite, aka rig shark or spotted dogfish).

Most diners have embraced the new approach, say Rameka and his partner Natalie Bulman, the restaurant manager. "Some people like the control of choosing things, but most people have realised it's more affordable," says Bulman. "It's only five courses so it's degustation but it's not overwhelming."

It's also a big part of why Pacifica was named Best Regional Restaurant in this year's *Cuisine* NZ Good Food Awards, which the pair say has been a big boost. "It's reminded some people that we're here, and given others the idea that we've just opened."

And, as the restaurant nears a decade in business, it's clear this latest chapter has been something of a new beginning for both Rameka and Pacifica. *



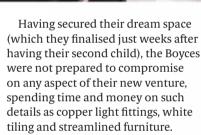


FLYING THE FLAG

AMY STEWART discovers there's a lot to like at Gisborne's stylish new Flagship Eatery.

s well as constantly badgering her to open for lunch, happy diners from out of town at Gisborne's USSCo would often pull co-owner Christine Boyce aside to gush about how spectacular the restaurant was – "as good as" restaurants in Auckland, Melbourne, London. "They're being nice," Christine sighs, "and that's super, but we'd like people to have higher expectations of Gisborne. There's no reason not to."

Christine and her chef husband Tom Boyce had their eye on the gorgeous space that now houses
Flagship Eatery for quite some time,
and when it finally became available
early this year, they pounced. It's in
the same Union Steamship Co building
as USSCo, making for a very agreeable
commute, as well as sharing the same
heritage, industrial vibe as their
successful bistro. The pair wanted to
offer the same great service and quality
food, "just with a more pared-back,
daytime service". They also wanted
to offer the city something a bit
different in a cafe. "We didn't want to
replicate anything that's already here."



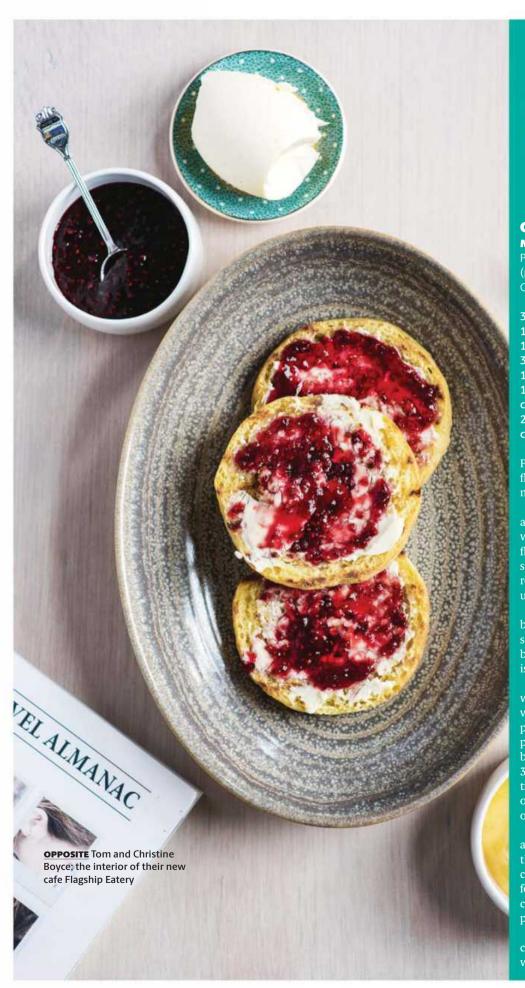
"We figured that we had to do it properly the first time." And naturally, this ethos extends to the great food, which has a healthy bent combined with excellent flavours. Drop in for brunch to enjoy the likes of buckwheat pancakes with poached pear, blueberry, coconut yoghurt and honey, or stay for a lunch of pork and prawn dumplings with shaved cabbage, chilli soy sauce and pickled cucumber. The housemade crumpets (recipe at right) have quickly become a crowd favourite.

In addition to USSCo, the Boyces also run Mexican-themed Friday nights, dubbed Day of the Taco, upstairs – the addition of the new Flagship Eatery kitchen has meant a very welcome space for the weekly taco construction.

It's still early days for the cafe, but locals and out-of-towners alike are delighted with the new offering. *

Flagship Eatery 14 Childers Rd, Gisborne ph: 06-281 0372 facebook.com/flagshipeatery

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CRUMPETS

MAKES 5

Preparation 10 minutes (plus 20 minutes rising time) Cooking 15 minutes

350g flour 14g dried active yeast 1 teaspoon sugar 350ml milk, lukewarm 1 teaspoon baking soda 1 teaspoon salt cooking oil spray 2 tablespoons vegetable oil cream cheese and jam to serve

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Put the flour and yeast in a large bowl and mix well to combine.

Add the sugar to the lukewarm milk and mix to dissolve the sugar. Use a wooden spoon to beat the milk into the flour and yeast until you have a thick, smooth batter. Cover and set aside at room temperature for 20 minutes or until the batter has doubled in volume.

Add 200ml lukewarm water to the batter, along with the baking soda and salt, then use the wooden spoon to beat until combined and the batter is the consistency of double cream.

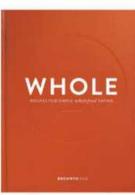
Spray the insides of 5 metal rings with cooking oil spray, Heat the vegetable oil in a large ovenproof frying pan over medium heat, then carefully place the rings in the pan. Pour the batter among the rings and cook for 3-4 minutes on the stovetop, then transfer to the oven for 5 minutes, or until you can see raw dough oozing out the top of the rings.

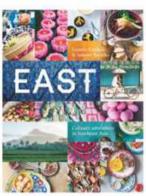
Remove the pan from the oven and carefully remove the rings from the crumpets. Use a spatula to turn the crumpets over then return to the oven for 5-10 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Remove from the pan and set aside to cool.

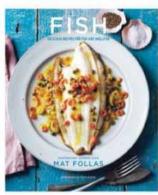
When ready to serve, halve the crumpets and toast them. Serve with cream cheese and jam.

BOOKS









The Pasta Book

Gennaro Contaldo, Penguin, p/b, \$20

This little paperback punches above its weight with 50 great pasta dishes. Gennaro Contaldo is an Italian-born chef and restaurateur who has a close association with Jamie Oliver, His how-to videos appear on Oliver's Food Tube channel and this book is a continuation of that relationship. The Basics section kicks things off with instructions on making everything from fresh pasta (complete with helpful step-by-step photos) to tomato sauce, pesto and bolognese. The book's then divided into seasonal chapters, segueing from broad bean, mint and pancetta ditalini in spring through to an autumnal slow-cooked duck pappardelle, then radicchio and gorgonzola tagliatelle for winter. It would be a great book for both beginner cooks and the more adventurous, offering straightforward instructions for everything from carbonara to Sardinian ricotta, lemon and mint culurzones (which resemble little pasta moneybags). SARAH WALL

Whole: Recipes for Simple Wholefood Eating

Beatnik Publishing, h/b, \$60

There's no doubt the wholefood movement is here to stay, but if you're whole-curious and haven't yet made the jump to investing in a dehydrator, this book is for you. Originally the product of editor Bronwyn Kan's university assignment, it's a comprehensive book that draws together a range of collaborators. This means it's not all raw, and it's not all

sugar-free (though there are still lots of those recipes, if that's what you're after). Most helpfully, it means you can work out which of these whole-foodie bloggers' styles suits you best. There's crustless quiche with smoked fish and kale from Kelly Gibney of Bonnie Delicious, alongside potato gratin with almond milk by Sophie Carew of Carew Kitchen (both are excellent). I'm also looking forward to a foray into raw cheesecake-making with the mango and tumeric offering from Buffy Gill of Be Good Organics. This is a talented group of women rethinking food – give it a try. AMY STEWART

Fact

Leanne Kitchen & Antony Suvalko, Hardie Grant, h/b, \$55

New Zealanders Leanne Kitchen and Antony Suvalko co-authored the fantastic The Real Food of China a few years ago – this is their second offering, this time focusing on Southeast Asian cooking. Encompassing influences from Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia and Vietnam, it's a selection of the authors' favourite dishes – "recipes we find ourselves craving again and again". You'll find classic renditions of the likes of nonya chicken, beef rendang and pad Thai, but there are also plenty of more adventurous options. Evocative images of people and places from the authors' travels are dotted throughout, and the colourful food photographs are equally compelling. There's a helpful glossary of more unusual ingredients, along with suggestions on where to buy them, as well as an excellent introductory chapter of basic recipes,

with essentials from nuoc cham to sambals, pickles and curry pastes. I've tagged numerous recipes I want to make, many of them delightfully simple, including rich spice-braised beef, coconut grilled chicken and caramel galangal salmon. **sw**

Fish

Mat Follas, Ryland Peters & Small, h/b, \$60

Chef Mat Follas grew up in New Zealand, learning to fish as a child and often heading out tramping as a teenager, foraging for shellfish and crabs along the shoreline. He moved to Dorset in the UK as an adult, and in 2009 won British MasterChef. Since then, he's enjoyed considerable success as a restaurant owner and food writer, and this is his first book, focusing on his love of seafood. While some of the species used are specific to the UK, the recipes are grouped into categories such as "flat fish" and "round fish", meaning you can easily substitute New Zealand equivalents. And there are also lots of delicious suggestions for more familiar options, including sweet chilli squid, mussel gratin, gurnard with roast tomatoes and numerous great salmon ideas (including a very good looking salmon and dill pithivier). The recipes are simple to follow, using readily available ingredients, and the photography makes every dish look immensely appealing. sw

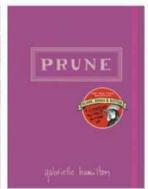
The Masters At Home Bloomsbury, h/b, \$50

This is a fascinating book to browse through, with brief bios of the 32 chefs

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featured (including our own Peter Gordon), along with compelling portraits and of course recipes for some of the dishes these professionals like to cook at home. Gordon Ramsay shares his lamb stew with shallots, smoked bacon and prunes while Tetsuya Wakuda talks you through chicken karaage. Ferran Adria has given a recipe for a summery watermelon, tomato and basil soup, Jamie Oliver the chocolate, cappuccino and praline cake he made for wife Jools' birthday, and Pierre Koffmann keeps it simple with a Sunday lunch standby of lamb shoulder and potatoes. Each chef also shares a secret food haunt, from a favourite butcher to coffee shops and farmers' markets, and their quotes are lovely - "I think the most important ingredient to use in the kitchen is one's mind," says Massimo Bottura. sw

My Street Food Kitchen

Jennifer Joyce, Murdoch Books, h/b, \$45

If you're a keen traveller, you're no doubt familiar with the thrill of discovering great street food, and the fact that it's often better than what you've been eating in restaurants. Jennifer Joyce is a food writer who's roamed the globe and in this delightful book, she's translated the flavours of 24 different countries for the home cook. From US-favourite buttermilk fried chicken to Brazilian pork and black bean stew, Moroccan tagines, Japanese gyoza, Vietnamese banh mi and much, much more, these are hugely appealing recipes you'll want to start making immediately. Joyce includes plenty of tips for making

Joyce is a food writer who's roamed the globe and in this delightful book she's translated the flavours of 24 different countries for the home cook

elements ahead, plus advises where you could use a slow-cooker. The colourful photography is compelling, and I wanted to make (not to mention eat) pretty much everything. For a preview of some of the recipes, see our extract on page 110. sw

Prune

Gabrielle Hamilton, Hardie Grant, h/b, \$65

Imagine you are a commis chef – you know your gastrique from your beurre noisette, you're in a new kitchen for the first time and you've just received a compendium of recipes complete with scrawled handwritten tips. This is that book. Gabrielle Hamilton's Prune restaurant opened in New York 15 years ago to much acclaim - this is her first cookbook, a compilation of all the little bits of magic and wisdom that have made Prune an institution. Hamilton expects perfection in every detail and there are plenty of precise instructions – when peeling carrots for a side dish of carrots with preserved lemon butter and honeycomb, for instance, use "long fluid strokes please - do not chisel away at them". However, her humour shines through and the rigorous approach will no

doubt improve your cooking – the explicit notes that accompany the recipes for potatoes roesti and asparagus with sable butter are both excellent examples. This is a fascinating, rewarding book to pore over, whether you want to make the likes of cornmeal pound cake and salt-baked beef, or simply immerse yourself in the machinations of a successful restaurant. GINNY GRANT

A Year Of Practiculture

Rohan Anderson, Hardie Grant, h/b, \$49.95

As Rohan Anderson of popular Australian food blog Whole Larder Love puts it, he is "a bloke who grows most of his food, hunts for meat and sneaks around in the bush looking for free tucker", which, as an urban desk-dweller, I find strangely compelling. Anderson dropped his office job and went bush, living by the seasons and assembling this lovely collection of recipes along the way, which is laid out like an American field guide and narrated like a boozy late-night chat. As an ex-fast food devotee. Anderson now thrives on dishes such as zucchini, nuts and burghul salad that, by his own admission, in his past life he would have called "hippie sh**". There are some stunners here, including (wife) Kate's magical forest mushroom and onion pie, sumac-crusted flathead with lemon, and the hipster's kale pizza with bacon, mozzarella and blue cheese. At once encouraging and inspiring, this is a rugged approach to wholefood eating that looks and tastes great. AS *

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QUICK SMART

5 QUICK SMART WAYS WITH... KALE PESTO

This pesto is great in all kinds of dishes

KALE PESTO

MAKES 1 CUP

150g kale leaves (about 4 leaves), stems discarded, leaves washed 1 clove garlic ½ cup roasted almonds pinch of chilli flakes juice of ½ lemon ¼-½ cup extra virgin olive oil 35g freshly grated parmesan or pecorino romano

Blanch the kale leaves in boiling salted water for 2 minutes, then drain and cool under cold running water. Squeeze out as much liquid as possible, then coarsely chop. Put the garlic and almonds in a food processor and process to a coarse crumb. Add the chilli flakes and kale and process until roughly blended. Transfer to a bowl and stir in the lemon juice and enough oil to make a smooth paste (add a little water if you feel the mix is too oily), then stir in the parmesan (you can freeze the pesto without the parmesan). Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 1 week.

1

Baked fish, potatoes & kale pesto

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Slice 750g potatoes thinly, then toss with a sliced clove of garlic, ½ tablespoon thyme leaves and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Spread over a baking paper-lined oven tray. Toss 300g sliced portobello mushrooms with the same amounts of garlic, thyme and oil, then put on top of the potatoes. Season generously with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes, removing the foil after 15 minutes. Smear 4 skinned and boned white fish fillets evenly with ½ cup kale pesto, place on top of the vegetables and return to the oven for a final 10 minutes or until cooked through.

2.

Warm lentil & kale pesto salad

Dress just-cooked hot lentils or grains (such as farro, freekeh or pearl barley) with a spoonful or two of kale pesto. Drizzle with a little wine vinegar, then toss with cherry tomatoes and diced celery or cucumber.



OUICK SMART



Farfalle with kale pesto & green vegetables Cook farfalle or other pasta shapes until al dente, adding peas or broccoli florets in the last few minutes. Drain well, reserving 1 cup of cooking water. Put the pasta and vegetables in a large bowl with the kale pesto, adding a little of the pasta water to thin the mix enough to make a sauce. Stir in grated lemon zest and juice, then serve topped with grated parmesan.



Roast vegetables with kale pesto & whipped feta Thin a spoonful or two of kale pesto with a little water, then drizzle over ovenroasted vegetables such as yams and kumara and serve with feta that has been whipped with a little sour cream until smooth. Delicious served as a side with grilled lamb.



Chicken, asparagus & egg salad with kale pesto Poach and shred chicken breasts, then toss with kale pesto (thinned with a little water) and a salad of crisp



Pork with soba noodles

Marinate sliced pork fillet in sov sauce. grated ginger, chopped garlic, honey and sesame oil for 30 minutes. Stir-fry with broccoli or beans, then scatter with chopped spring onions and serve with chilled soba noodles, dressed with rice vinegar and sesame oil.

Roast cauliflower & chorizo salad Toss florets of cauliflower with smoked paprika and olive oil. Season well, then toss with thickly sliced chorizo in a roasting dish and cook in a hot oven until tender. While still of chopped flat-leafed parsley and thinly sliced red onion softened in



QUICK SMART

CRISP TOFU & VEGETABLES WITH BROWN SUSHI RICE

SERVES 4

2 cups brown sushi rice (I used Gen-Ji-Mai brand)

300g firm tofu

2 tablespoons soy sauce

1/4 cup rice vinegar

1 tablespoon caster sugar

1 tablespoon mirin

3 cups green vegetables (I used asparagus and edamame beans) cornflour for dusting

4 teaspoons vegetable oil (I used sunflower)

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped 3cm ginger, peeled, grated

3 spring onions, finely chopped

1 teaspoon sesame oil ½ avocado, chopped 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted shredded nori sheets and/or shichimi togarashi* (optional) to serve

Cook the rice according to the packet directions. Meanwhile, pat the tofu dry with paper towels then cut into slices and drizzle with 1 tablespoon of sov sauce. Set aside to marinate.

Combine the rice vinegar, caster sugar, mirin and remaining soy sauce in a small saucepan. Bring to the boil to dissolve the sugar, then set aside.

Blanch the vegetables in boiling water, then drain and set aside.

Pat the marinated tofu dry, then dust with cornflour. Heat 3 teaspoons of the vegetable oil in a large frying

pan, then fry the tofu for 1-2 minutes each side or until golden. Remove and drain on paper towels. Add the remaining vegetable oil to the same frying pan, then fry the garlic, ginger and spring onions until fragrant. Stir the mix through the cooked rice, along with the sesame oil.

Spoon the rice into bowls, then top with the tofu, avocado and vegetables. Scatter with the sesame seeds, nori and shichimi togarashi (if using). * Nori sheets are dried seaweed (the variety typically used to wrap sushi), while shichimi togarashi is a Japanese spice mix. Look for both in Asian food stores.







(use gluten-free soy sauce and rice vinegar)



QUICK SMART

ROAST CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS WITH NEW POTATOES, CHERRY TOMATOES & OLIVES

Put **chicken drumsticks**, halved **new potatoes**, some fresh **oregano** and a **can of cherry tomatoes** in a roasting dish. Scatter with **olives** and **feta**, then bake in a hot oven for 40 minutes or until the chicken and potatoes are cooked through. Scatter with chopped **flat-leafed parsley** and serve.





Spaghetti with artichoke, pancetta & parsley Fry batons of pancetta or streaky bacon in olive oil until crisp. Peel and trim fresh artichokes and thinly slice. Add to the bacon along with slivers of garlic, grated lemon zest and juice and plenty of chopped flat-leafed parsley and fry until tender. Toss through cooked spaghetti and serve topped with grated parmesan.

Lamb chops with vegetables & feta & yoghurt dressing

Marinate lamb chops in garlic, olive oil and grated lemon zest, then quickly panfry. Serve with fried or steamed asparagus, snow peas and zucchini, a quick dressing of feta and yoghurt blitzed with garlic and chilli flakes, and steamed rice tossed with plenty of chopped dill, chives or parsley.

Venison sliders Mix venison mince with egg, milk, fresh breadcrumbs, chopped parsley, garlic and a little grated parmesan. Shape into small patties and fry for a few minutes each side then put into slider buns with sliced quick pickled cucumber, tomato and salad greens. The same mix can be shaped into meatballs and poached in your favourite homemade tomato sauce for spaghetti and meatballs.

ROAST CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS WITH NEW POTATOES, CHERRY TOMATOES & OLIVES





MUSSELS, PEAS & SPINACH LINGUINI

To serve four, steam open 1.2kg mussels in ½ cup white wine, then remove from the shells and coarsely chop (reserve and strain the cooking liquid). Fry a diced small red onion in olive oil with fresh **tarragon** (use dried if unavailable), then add the reserved mussel liquor, 2 cups **peas** and the chopped mussels. Cook for a minute, then add 150g **baby spinach** leaves and stir until wilted. Toss through 500g cooked fresh linguine, lemon zest and some crisp-fried **crumbs** of day-old bread.





Beef skewers with satay sauce

Thread beef fillet onto skewers and marinate in a mash of garlic, ginger, vegetable oil and turmeric for 30 minutes before grilling. Make a satay sauce by heating together ½ cup peanut butter (I like Fix and Fogg's Smoke and Fire) with ½ cup coconut milk, 1 teaspoon fish sauce, 1 tablespoon soy sauce, 1 tablespoon lime juice and 1 teaspoon brown sugar. Serve in lettuce cups with bean sprouts, and plenty of coriander, sliced chilli and lime wedges on the side.

Lamb merguez sausages & lentils

Fry chopped lamb merguez sausages until brown, then set aside. Fry finely chopped onion, garlic and carrot. Add ground cumin, coriander and smoked paprika and fry until fragrant. Add a can of lentils, some tomato passata, slivers of preserved lemon and the merguez to the pan. Cook until heated through, then stir in plenty of chopped coriander leaves. *



To watch videos of Ginny Grant dishing up more Quick Smart ideas, visit

cuisine.co.nz



CREDITS Broste Satin cutlery from May Time Marketing; marble background from Artedomus. For full details, see Credits Index.

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in season

CELERIAC AND PEARS can star in all kinds of spring dishes

CELERIAC & POTATO GRATIN

Thinly slice peeled celeriac and potatoes, then layer into a buttered gratin dish along with slivers of garlic and thyme leaves, seasoning each layer generously. Dot with butter, pour in chicken or vegetable stock (or milk or cream, depending on how rich you want the gratin to be), top with breadcrumbs and grate some parmesan over the top. Bake in a hot oven until golden and bubbling, then serve alongside roast beef or lamb.

CELERIAC SOUP WITH BACON

Fry batons of bacon in a saucepan until crisp, then set a few aside to garnish the soup. Add chopped onion, leek and rosemary to the remaining bacon and cook until soft. Add peeled and diced celeriac and potatoes, along with vegetable or chicken stock, and season well. Cook until tender, then puree half the soup. Return the pureed soup to the pan, and stir in a little cream or creme fraiche. Garnish with finely chopped parsley and the reserved bacon.

CELERIAC & APPLE REMOULADE

Cut peeled celeriac into matchsticks and put in a bowl of water with the juice of 1 lemon. Repeat with an apple. Make a dressing of Dijon and wholegrain mustard, lemon juice or white wine vinegar and extra virgin olive oil. Drain the celeriac and apple, then toss together with the dressing, a few spoonfuls of capers and chopped parsley or chives. Serve with sliced salami and rye bread.

PEAR & ASPARAGUS SALAD

For a light spring lunch, cook asparagus until bite tender, then drain and cool in iced water. Pat dry and put in a bowl with sliced pear, torn baby gem lettuce and toasted walnuts. Dress with a vinaigrette made with Dijon mustard, lemon juice and extra virgin olive oil.

POACHED PEARS, BRIOCHE & PISTACHIOS

For a great dessert, poach peeled pears in a light sugar syrup with vanilla and orange peel until tender. Serve warm with slices of toasted brioche and a dollop of mascarpone mixed with a little maple syrup, drizzled with some of the poaching liquid. Top with lightly toasted pistachios.

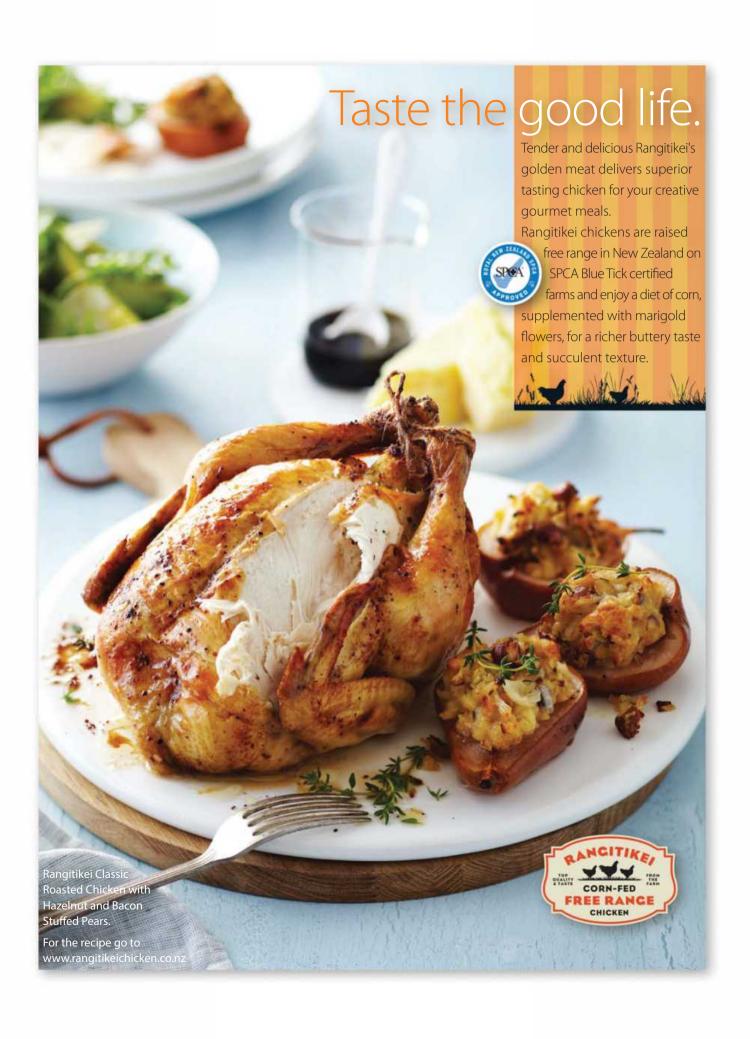
PICKLED PEAR & PORK BELLY BANH MI

Combine cider (ideally perry) vinegar with sugar, star anise, slices of ginger and red chilli in a saucepan then bring to the boil. Allow to cool, then pour over thin wedges of peeled pear (you can store the pickled pears in the fridge for up to a week, though the pear will soften). Rub the flesh of pork belly with sea salt, ground fennel and Chinese five spice powder, then roast until tender. Cut the pork into thin slices and put in baguettes with the pickled pear, Vietnamese mint, coriander, mint and thin slices of cucumber. ** GINNY GRANT

ALSO IN SEASON

artichokes, asparagus,
Braeburn apples,
grapefruit, kiwifruit,
navel oranges,
new potatoes, peas,
rhubarb, snowpeas,
swedes, tangelos,
tarragon, yams,
zucchini

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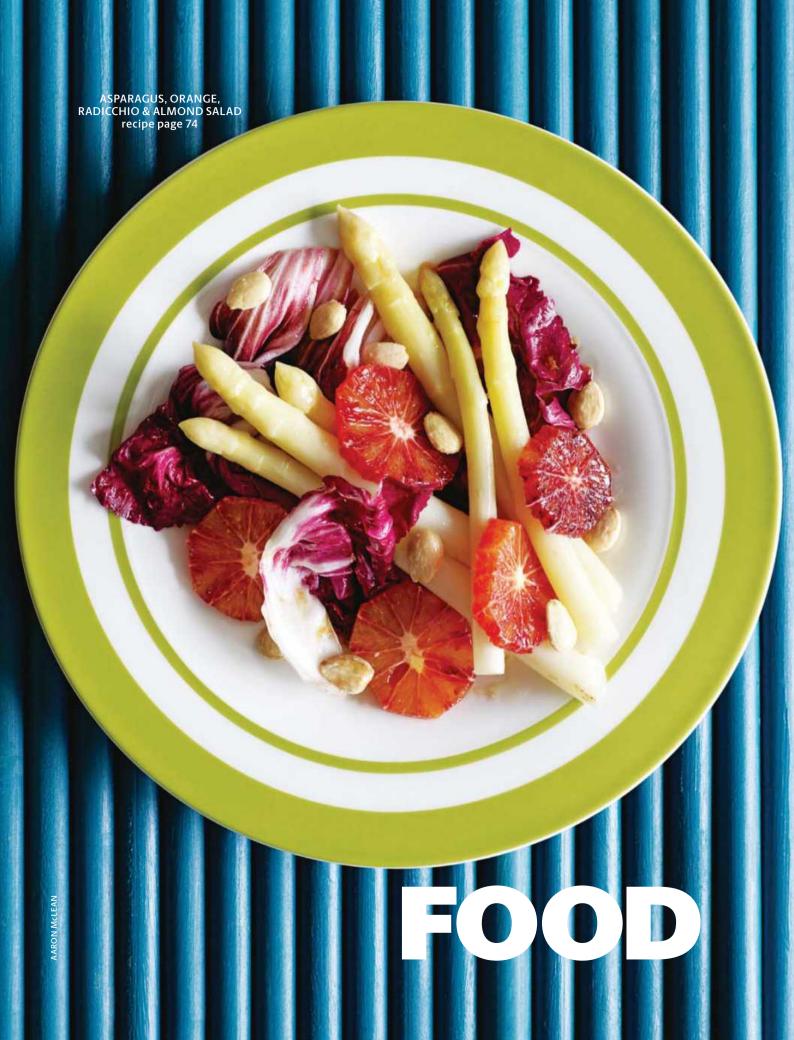


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FIONA SMITH



Entertaining friends doesn't have to send you bankrupt – with a bit of ingenuity you can produce a three-course dinner party for six people that looks impressive, tastes delicious and only costs around \$50 total. Here, I've given the option of a vegetarian, meat or seafood main course so you can choose which is best for your guests. Or if you're catering for a big crowd, make them all. We've included some of our Best Buy wine picks as suggestions for matching with each dish, to keep your dinner party on a budget-friendly path.

PEA & CHICKPEA PUREE WITH CUMIN & GINGER BRAISED CARROTS

SERVES 6

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 35 minutes

Dried or canned beans and legumes are cheap, nutritious and delicious. Here, I've added flavour and interest to a simple chickpea dip by serving it with braised spiced carrots.

420g can chickpeas, drained, rinsed 250g (2 cups) cooked peas 2 tablespoons olive oil finely grated zest of ½ lemon ½ teaspoon salt

500g carrots, peeled (I used baby spring carrots)
100g butter

1 teaspoon cumin seeds, lightly crushed

1 clove garlic, crushed

4cm piece ginger, peeled, thinly sliced warmed flatbreads to serve

Place the chickpeas, peas, oil, lemon zest and salt in a food processor. Process to form a smooth puree, adding 1-2 tablespoons water to achieve the consistency you want. Set aside.

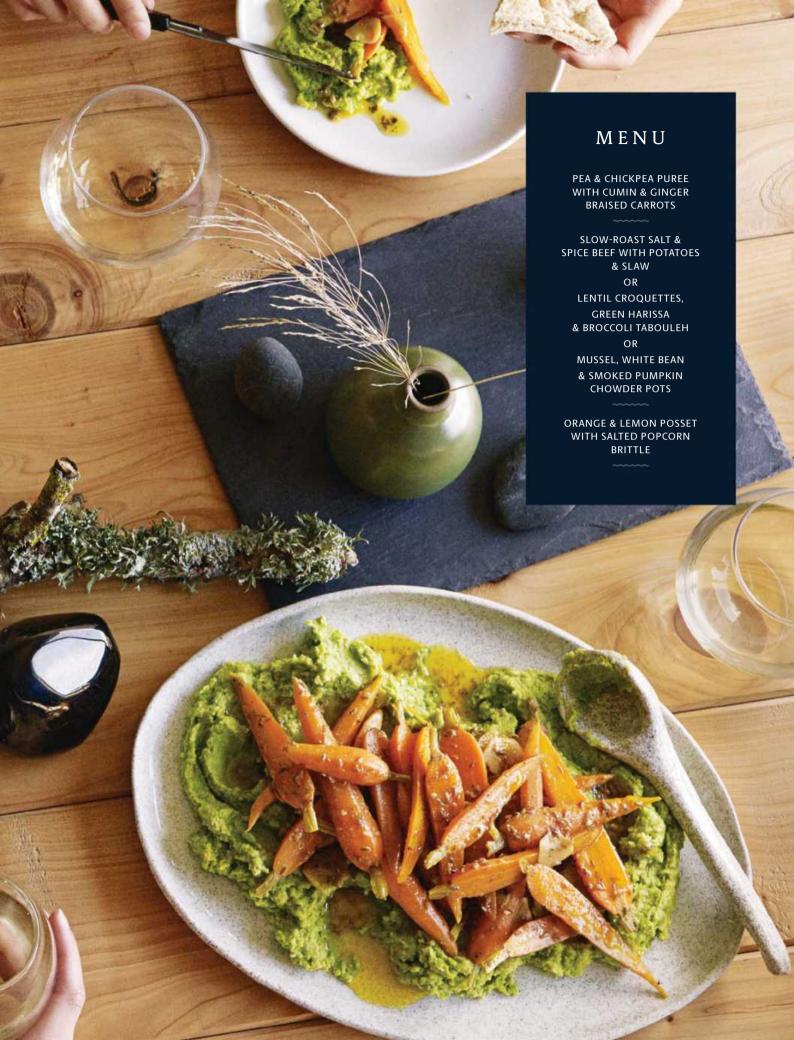
Cut the carrots into thick batons (if you're using baby spring carrots, just trim the ends and halve if necessary).

Put a frying pan with a lid over medium heat. Add the butter and let it melt, then add the cumin and garlic and fry, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the carrots, ginger and ½ cup water (or white wine if you have some open!). Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and stir to combine, then bring to the boil. Cover and reduce the heat to low. Cook for about 30 minutes, uncovering for the last 10, or until the carrots are tender and very little liquid is left, just the flavoured butter coating the carrots (if the carrots look like they're going to boil dry during cooking, add a little more water).

Spread the chickpea puree over a large serving plate, then arrange the carrots and butter on top. Serve with warmed flatbreads.

WINE A racy, medium-dry riesling – try Mud House Waipara Valley Riesling 2014.





SLOW-ROAST SALT & SPICE BEEF WITH POTATOES & SLAW

SERVES 6

Preparation 20 minutes (plus 24 hours soaking time) Cooking 5 hours

Corned beef is one of the cheapest pieces of meat you can buy, making it ideal for feeding a crowd. Many people think they don't like corned beef due to bad childhood memories of boiled lumps, but this slow-roasted version is bound to convert anyone. As corned beef is quite salty, I like to soak it overnight, meaning you'll need to start the recipe the day before serving.

1.1kg corned beef

2 tablespoons pickling spice (this can be quite spicy, so use less if you don't like too much heat, or pick the whole bits of chilli out)

1 teaspoon salt

6 tablespoons olive oil

2 onions, quartered

4 large Agria potatoes, peeled, halved

2 carrots, peeled

½ green cabbage, very finely sliced juice of 1 lemon

Place the corned beef in a bowl and cover with water. Refrigerate for 24 hours, changing the water twice during this time. Drain and pat dry with paper towels.

Preheat the oven to 130°C. Grind the pickling spice and salt to a coarse powder in a mortar and pestle or spice grinder. Rub the beef with 1 tablespoon of the oil, then pat all over with the spice mix, pressing to coat.

Arrange the onions in a single layer in the centre of a roasting dish, then put the beef on top. Roast the beef in the oven for 3 hours, then remove from the oven and arrange the potatoes around the beef. Pour 1 cup of water into the roasting dish, then cover tightly with foil and return to the oven for a further 2 hours.

Remove the roasting dish from the oven and turn the oven up to 220°C. Transfer the beef to a plate, cover with foil and set aside to rest for about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, transfer the cooking liquid and onions to a bowl. Cut the potatoes into chunks, then toss with 2 tablespoons of the remaining oil and 3 tablespoons of the reserved cooking liquid. Arrange on a lipped roasting tray in a single layer and roast for 10 minutes, turning once, until golden and crisp (I don't season the potatoes as the beef is quite salty).

Use a vegetable peeler to slice the carrots very thinly into ribbons, then put in a bowl with the cabbage. Add 5 tablespoons of the reserved cooking liquid to the vegetables, along with the remaining 3 tablespoons oil and the lemon juice, and toss to combine. Carve the beef and serve with the slaw, potatoes and onions. > WINE An aromatic, textural viognier. Gladstone Vineyard Viognier 2014 would be ideal.









LENTIL CROQUETTES, GREEN HARISSA & BROCCOLI TABOULEH

SERVES 6

Preparation 30 minutes / Cooking 1 hour 10 minutes

Lentils are full of protein and very budget-friendly. The red lentils break down while the brown stay whole, giving textural contrast. If you prefer, you could panfry the croquettes in oil.

500g kumara, peeled, chopped 8 tablespoons olive oil 1 onion, finely chopped zest and juice of 1 lemon 3 cloves garlic, crushed 2 teaspoons cumin seeds, lightly crushed 100g brown lentils, rinsed 100g red lentils, rinsed 2 cups vegetable stock ½ cup dry breadcrumbs 4 green chillies, deseeded 1 firmly packed cup fresh coriander leaves and stems 150g bulghur wheat 1 small head broccoli, cut into florets ½ cup chopped flat-leafed parsley 1 small red onion, very finely sliced spray cooking oil

Steam the kumara pieces over a saucepan of boiling water for 10 minutes or until tender. Mash and set aside.

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a heavy-based saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, lemon zest, 2 cloves of the garlic and 1 teaspoon of the cumin, then fry, stirring for 5 minutes. Add the brown and red lentils, stock and ½ cup water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a vigorous simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Reduce the heat to a low simmer and cook for 20-25 minutes or until the lentils are tender. Towards the end of cooking time, stir regularly to evaporate as much liquid as you can – you want to be left with a very thick dhal-like mixture. Stir in the kumara mash, then season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and set aside to cool completely.

Using slightly wet hands, divide the cooled mixture into 12 and shape into logs. Roll the croquettes through the breadcrumbs, then transfer to a baking tray.

To make the green harissa, toast the remaining teaspoon of cumin seeds in a frying pan for 30 seconds until fragrant. Put the cumin, remaining clove of garlic, chillies, coriander and 2 tablespoons of the remaining oil in a food processor, then process to a coarse paste.

Put the bulghur wheat in a bowl and cover with cold water. Set aside for 30 minutes or until tender. Drain well, pressing down on the wheat with the back of a spoon to squeeze out excess water. Transfer to a bowl.

Steam the broccoli for 4 minutes until just tender. Cool under cold water, then finely chop and stir into the wheat, along with the parsley, red onion, lemon juice and remaining 4 tablespoons oil. Season well.

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Spray the croquettes with oil, then bake for 20 minutes. Serve with the harissa and broccoli tabouleh.

> WINE A medium pinot gris – try Clifford Bay Pinot Gris 2014.

FIONA SMITH

MUSSEL, WHITE BEAN & SMOKED PUMPKIN CHOWDER POTS

SERVES 6

Preparation 30 minutes / Cooking 1 hour

Mussels are not only cheap and delicious, they also appear near the top of the Forest & Bird Best Fish Guide (the New Zealand guide to sustainable seafood). I smoked the pumpkin to give the dish an extra depth of flavour, but if you don't have time you can use plain pumpkin and add a couple of teaspoons of smoked paprika along with the flour when you're adding it to the butter.

½ cup loose tea leaves

3 teaspoons sugar

5 tablespoons flour

750g pumpkin, peeled, deseeded, cut into 1.5cm pieces 250ml fish stock

1.2kg mussels, scrubbed, beards removed

50g butter

250ml milk

400g can cannellini or butter beans, drained, rinsed 1/4 cup finely chopped flat-leafed parsley

zest of 1 lemon

1 baguette

Line a frying pan or heatproof lipped baking dish with foil, then combine the tea leaves, sugar and 1 tablespoon flour and spread evenly over the foil. Put a wire rack in the dish then arrange the pumpkin on the rack in a single layer. Cover tightly with foil then heat on the stovetop over low heat for 15 minutes (the temperature needs to be low as too high a heat will cause the pumpkin to taste acrid). I open all the windows while doing this as it can get quite smoky. Uncover and set aside to cool.

Bring the stock to the boil in a large saucepan. Add the mussels, cover and reduce the heat to low. Cook for 2 minutes, then uncover and remove all the mussels that have opened. If any haven't opened, move them around a bit, then cover and cook for a further minute. Remove from the heat, discarding any that still haven't opened. Cool the mussels and cooking liquid, then remove the mussels from their shells and cut in half. Strain the liquid.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Melt the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the remaining flour, then cook, stirring for 3 minutes. Slowly stir in the reserved mussel liquid and the milk, then continue to cook, stirring constantly until smooth. Add the pumpkin, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and simmer for 12 minutes or until the pumpkin is just tender.

Add the mussels, beans, parsley and lemon zest to the pumpkin mix and stir to combine, then divide among 6 ovenproof bowls, or put in a casserole dish.

Tear one-third of the baguette into bite-sized pieces and scatter on top of the mussel mix, then bake for 15 minutes or until warmed through and the baguette is golden. Serve with the remaining warmed baguette. > WINE A bright, juicy sauvignon. We recommend Thornbury Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014.





FIONA SMITH

ORANGE & LEMON POSSET WITH SALTED POPCORN BRITTLE

SERVES 6

Preparation 15 minutes (plus 6 hours setting time) Cooking 20 minutes

A posset is a simple cream dessert that's set with acid – in this case lemon juice. The popcorn brittle adds a bit of drama and gives the dessert a contemporary feel that's perfect for a dinner party.

zest of ½ lemon
zest and flesh of 1 orange
125ml lemon juice (about 3 lemons)
170g sugar, plus 200g extra
500ml cream
pinch of nutmeg (optional)
3 cups plain popped popcorn (½ cup unpopped)

Put the lemon and orange zests, lemon juice and 170g sugar in a small saucepan over low heat. Bring to the boil, stirring occasionally, until the sugar has dissolved. Keep warm.

Pour the cream into a small, heavy-based saucepan with the nutmeg (if using) and heat gently until it comes to the boil. Pour the citrus syrup into the cream, whisking to combine, then pour through a sieve into a jug. Cut the orange flesh into segments then divide the segments among 6 serving glasses. Pour the cream mixture over the orange, then cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours (or overnight) until set.

Meanwhile, line a Swiss roll tin with baking paper and scatter the popcorn over it.

Put the remaining 200g sugar and 3 tablespoons water in a saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring constantly until the sugar dissolves. Boil for 7-8 minutes, without stirring, until the mixture turns golden in colour. Working very quickly, pour the toffee evenly over the popcorn and sprinkle with a little flaky sea salt. Leave for 5 minutes to harden and cool. Break into large pieces and store in an airtight container until ready to serve. Serve the posset with the brittle.

> WINE A luscious, medium-dry gewurztraminer – try Mission Estate Hawke's Bay Gewurztraminer 2014. *

CREDITS Trestle table from Arkade; stools and ceramic platter by Miss Changy; slate board, black ceramic platter, small black ceramic bowl, Duralex glasses, napkins and marble salt dish all from Tessuti; Heath Ceramics green ceramic vase, and serving fork, wine glasses and chowder bowls all from Everyday Needs; black vases, blue glazed ceramic bowl and salt dish all by Emily Siddell; black jet rocks from Jewels & Gems; black sand plates, platters, small dish and spoon all by Houston Design Co; Gidon Bing side plates (with chickpea puree) from Simon James Design; stemless wine glasses from Everyday Needs and Monmouth Glass Studio; blue plates from Father Rabbit. For full details, see Credits Index. Stylist assisted by Nicole Kim



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GINNY GRANT



At the beginning of spring, one of the vegetables I get most excited about seeing is asparagus. At first I tend to simply cook the spears on their own, with just a little butter or olive oil and some sea salt for adornment, but as the price comes down I also incorporate asparagus into meals. If you're lucky, you might come across some of the coloured varieties too; the beautiful, delicately flavoured white asparagus, or vibrant purple (though sadly the latter loses its colour when cooked).

ASPARAGUS, ORANGE, RADICCHIO & ALMOND SALAD

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 5 minutes

This salad is great as a simple starter or served as a side with roast chicken. I used white asparagus here – the ends can be quite stringy and tough, so I often peel them. The last of the blood oranges are around and make the salad look terrific, but regular oranges taste just as good if you can't find the former.

3 oranges

- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 bunches asparagus, ends trimmed
- 1 small radicchio lettuce, torn into pieces
- 3 tablespoons blanched almonds, toasted

Juice one orange and make a dressing by whisking the juice together with the sherry vinegar and extra virgin olive oil. Season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Set aside.

Peel the remaining oranges and cut into round slices over a small bowl, adding the slices to the bowl along with any orange juice.

Cook the asparagus in a large, wide saucepan of boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes or until just tender. Drain then combine with the radicchio and drizzle the orange dressing over everything. Arrange in bowls, then scatter with the almonds and orange segments.

> WINE A richly textured, medium-dry pinot gris – try Stoneleigh Latitude Marlborough Pinot Gris 2014.

LAMB & ASPARAGUS STEW WITH LEMON RICE PILAF

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 90 minutes

Spring lamb is another produce highlight of the season – it's succulent, sweet and tender. I used the leg meat in this recipe, but you could make it with shoulder if you prefer. Including asparagus in a fairly classic stew makes it a more elegant dish that's perfect for spring.

Lamb & asparagus stew

flour for dusting

800g diced lamb (ideally from the leg)

2 tablespoons olive oil

½ cup dry white wine

1 cup chicken stock

6 shallots or baby onions, peeled

2 bunches asparagus, ends trimmed, cut into 5cm pieces

½ cup sour cream or creme fraiche

3 tablespoons finely chopped dill (substitute with mint)

Put some flour in a bowl and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Toss the lamb in the flour to coat, shaking off the excess. Heat the oil in a wide saucepan or casserole dish and brown the lamb, in batches if necessary.

Add the wine and let it bubble up and boil, scraping the base of the dish with a wooden spoon. Add the stock and shallots or onions. Bring to a gentle simmer, then cover and cook for 1-1½ hours or until the lamb is tender.

Stir in the asparagus and cook, covered, for a further 2-3 minutes or until bright green and just tender. Stir in the sour cream and dill. Taste and season, then serve immediately with the pilaf.

Lemon rice pilaf

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 onion, finely chopped

11/2 cups long grain rice

grated zest and juice of 2 lemons

2½ cups chicken stock

1 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons finely chopped dill (substitute with flat-leafed parsley)

lemon wedges to serve

Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium heat, then fry the onion for 5-10 minutes until soft. Add the rice and the lemon zest and cook, stirring to coat in the onion, for 1 minute. Add the stock and salt. Bring to the boil, then cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 18 minutes. Remove from the heat and stand, covered, for 5 minutes, then stir in the lemon juice and dill. Serve with lemon wedges.

> WINE A lifted, berry fruit-infused pinot noir such as Roaring Meg Central Otago Pinot Noir 2013.







SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes Cooking 20 minutes

1/2 cup freekeh 1/2 teaspoon salt zest and juice of 1 lemon pinch of chilli flakes 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil 1/2 cup flat-leafed parsley,

finely chopped 2 bunches asparagus, ends trimmed 3 radishes, thinly sliced 8 anchovies

Rinse the freekeh under cold running water, then put in a saucepan with 1½ cups water and the salt. Bring to the boil, then cover, reduce the heat to a low simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Remove from the heat and stand, covered, for a further 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the dressing by whisking together the lemon zest and juice, chilli flakes and oil. Add most of the dressing to the drained warm freekeh (reserve a little to toss with the asparagus and radishes), along with the parsley. Toss to combine, then season to taste with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Set aside.

Cook the asparagus in a large, wide saucepan of boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes or until bright green and just tender. Drain well, then toss with the radishes and remaining dressing.

Place a spoonful of the freekeh mix on each plate, then top with the asparagus and radishes. Drape the anchovies over everything, then serve.

> WINE A fresh, herbal sauvignon blanc – try Tuatara Bay Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014.

All about freekeh

Freekeh is a green wheat that has been harvested before it has fully matured. It is then dried and roasted and has a deliciously nutty flavour. It originated in the Arabic world and is popular in those cuisines, as well as in North Africa. It can be cooked like rice, using a ratio of one part freekeh to one ½ times liquid (and if you have a rice cooker then you can use it to cook freekeh). It's great in warm salads, and works well with spices added to it.



Ricotta gnocchi is simple to make and a great foil for all kinds of sauces and vegetables – also try serving it with roast pumpkin, burnt butter and sage or with a simple tomato sauce, olives and basil

CLAYPOT CHICKEN WITH ASPARAGUS & OYSTER MUSHROOMS

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 25 minutes

This all-in-one meal is satisfyingly rich in flavour. A claypot isn't essential – a heavy-based casserole dish or wide saucepan with a lid will both also work well here. You just want to achieve the delicious golden crust of rice at the bottom of the dish.

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 tablespoon oyster sauce

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon Shaoxing wine

1 teaspoon cornflour

600g chicken thighs, cut into 3cm chunks

11/2 cups basmati or jasmine rice

21/2 cups chicken stock

1 teaspoon flaky sea salt

5cm piece ginger, peeled, cut into very thin matchsticks

3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

1 bunch asparagus, ends trimmed, cut into 5cm pieces

125g oyster mushrooms, coarsely torn

2 spring onions, thinly sliced

1 teaspoon sesame oil

Put the vegetable oil, oyster and soy sauces, Shaoxing wine and cornflour in a bowl and mix well to combine. Add the chicken and stir to combine and coat in the sauce mix. Set aside while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

Rinse the rice under cold running water until the water runs clear. Put the rice, stock, salt, ginger and garlic in a claypot or large, wide saucepan with a lid. Bring to the boil, then add the chicken and sauce mixture. Cover with a lid and simmer over a very low heat for 20 minutes, without uncovering for any reason.

Add the asparagus and mushrooms and simmer, uncovered, for a further 5 minutes or until the asparagus is bright green and just tender. Stir in the spring onions and drizzle with the sesame oil, then serve immediately.

> WINE A ripe, lively pinot noir – try Catalina Sounds Marlborough Pinot Noir 2013.

RICOTTA GNOCCHI WITH PEA PUREE & ASPARAGUS

SERVES 4

Preparation 30 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

The various components of this dish can each be made ahead and assembled at the last minute. It's also delicious garnished with crisp pieces of pancetta.

Ricotta gnocchi

300g ricotta (use a good-quality one such as Zany Zeus)
50g finely grated parmesan
grated zest of 1 lemon
1 egg, lightly beaten
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives
70g-100g flour

Mix the ricotta, parmesan, zest, egg, chives and 70g flour together. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Test if the mix has enough flour by shaping a teaspoon of the mix into a ball (or use 2 teaspoons to shape into a quenelle) and dropping into a saucepan of simmering salted water. After the gnocchi has risen to the top, leave for 1 minute then remove with a slotted spoon.

If the gnocchi breaks apart, you will need to add a little more flour to the rest of the mix then re-test. If it is intact and cooked, then shape the rest of the gnocchi and put onto a lined baking tray. Set aside until ready to cook.

For the pea puree & to serve

1 small clove garlic

11/2 cups (250g) frozen peas

generous sprig of mint, plus small leaves to garnish

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 bunch asparagus (I used a mix of green and white), ends trimmed, spears sliced diagonally

Bring a saucepan of salted water to the boil, then add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Add the peas and sprig of mint. Cook for 2-3 minutes until the peas are just tender. Drain, reserving 1 cup of the cooking water, then plunge everything into iced water, so the peas stay vibrant green. Drain again, discarding the mint.

Using a stick blender or food processor, blend the peas, garlic and oil with a little of the reserved cooking water to form a smooth puree. Set aside.

When ready to serve, gently reheat the puree. Cook the asparagus in a saucepan of boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes or until just tender. Drain well. Add the gnocchi to a saucepan of simmering salted water. Once the gnocchi has risen to the top, leave for 1 minute then remove with a slotted spoon. Divide the puree among warmed bowls, then top with the gnocchi, asparagus and mint leaves. Serve. > WINE An extroverted, dry riesling. We recommend Vidal Marlborough Riesling 2014. *

CREDITS Thomas Sunny Day and Cornish Blue dinner plates all from The Studio of Tableware; paint background Beatnik from Resene. For full details, see Credits Index.







FLASHIN THE PAN

OLIVIA ANDREWS has quick and clever ideas for the midweek rush.

Recipes Olivia Andrews / Photography Steve Brown / Styling Kristine Duran-Thiessen



FLASH IN THE PAN

KOREAN SPRING VEGETABLE PANCAKE

SERVES 4

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

2/3 cup (100g) flour

2/3 cup (100g) rice flour

½ teaspoon salt

3 spring onions, cut into 5cm batons

8 asparagus spears, trimmed, sliced diagonally

1 bunch broccolini, stems thinly sliced diagonally

1/4 cup (60ml) soy sauce

1 tablespoon rice vinegar

1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon sesame oil

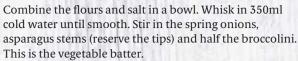
2 teaspoons sesame seeds

1 long red chilli, deseeded, half finely chopped, half cut into thin matchsticks (optional)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

300g medium tofu, drained on paper towels, cubed 1.5cm

100g frozen peas



For the dipping sauce, combine the soy sauce, vinegar, sugar, sesame oil, half the sesame seeds and the chopped chilli (if using) in a bowl, stirring until the sugar dissolves.

Heat the vegetable oil in a large frying pan about 30cm in diameter over medium heat. Pour in the vegetable batter and swirl the pan to coat the base. Working quickly, scatter the batter with the tofu, peas, remaining sesame seeds, asparagus tips and remaining broccolini, gently pressing the vegetables and tofu into the batter. Cook for 4 minutes or until the underside is golden.

Carefully place a large plate or round tray over the pan and tip the pancake onto it, then use a spatula to slide the pancake back into the pan. Cook for a further 2 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Slide the pancake onto a plate and cut into pieces, then sprinkle with the chilli matchsticks (if using). Serve with the dipping sauce.





LEMON & THYME CHICKEN WITH PEA & POTATO MASH

SERVES 4

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

700g floury potatoes, peeled, cubed 3cm
120g frozen peas
50g butter, cubed
3 tablespoons milk
1/3 cup coarsely chopped parsley
4 x 180g chicken breasts
11/2 tablespoons olive oil
1 lemon, zest finely grated, cut into wedges
2 tablespoons thyme leaves
watercress sprigs to serve

Put the potatoes in a saucepan, cover with cold water and season with salt. Bring to the boil, then cook for 12 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, put the peas in a bowl and cover with warm water. Drain the potatoes and peas and return to the saucepan. Mash with the butter and milk until combined. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then stir through the parsley.

Meanwhile, place the chicken on a board and cover with baking paper. Use a rolling pin or saucepan to beat the fillets until 2cm-thick. Use a sharp knife to score a cross-hatch pattern in one side of each chicken breast, cutting about halfway into the meat. Combine the oil, lemon zest and thyme in a bowl. Season, then add the chicken and mix well to coat.

Heat a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Cook the chicken, in batches if necessary, for 3 minutes each side or until golden and cooked through. Serve with the mash, watercress and lemon wedges.







zest and juice of 1 orange

- 1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 100ml extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
- 250g kale, stems discarded, leaves

torn into 6cm pieces

750g kumara, quartered lengthwise, sliced 1cm

4 x 180g beef scotch fillet steaks

250g haloumi, sliced into 8 pieces

Preheat the oven to 220°C. Whisk the orange juice, mustard, garlic and 3 tablespoons of oil in a bowl to combine. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper, then stir through the parsley and kale. Set aside.

Combine 1 tablespoon of the oil with the orange zest in a small bowl, and season. Arrange the kumara on a large baking paper-lined roasting tray. Drizzle with the zest and oil mix and toss to coat. Roast in

> the oven for 25 minutes or until tender. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a frying pan over high heat.

> > Season the beef on both sides, then cook for 3 minutes each side for medium-rare, or until cooked to your liking. Remove from the pan and set aside to rest for 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium-high, add a further tablespoon of oil and cook the haloumi slices for 1 minute each side until lightly golden. Serve the steaks with the kumara,

> > > haloumi and kale salad.

Cheat's kimchi

500g Chinese cabbage, sliced 1cm

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons caster sugar
- 2-3 teaspoons chilli powder (to taste)
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon miso paste
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 carrot, peeled, coarsely grated
- 1 green apple, peeled, cored, coarsely grated
- 3 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds, toasted

Put the cabbage in a bowl and sprinkle with the salt, then toss to combine. Set aside for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, put the garlic, sugar, chilli powder, fish sauce, miso paste and sesame oil in a small bowl and stir to combine. Add the carrot, apple, spring onions and sesame seeds to the cabbage and mix well to combine. Add the chilli mixture and mix well to combine. Set aside until ready to serve.

For the pork

1 tablespoon vegetable or peanut oil

4 x 200g pork cutlets

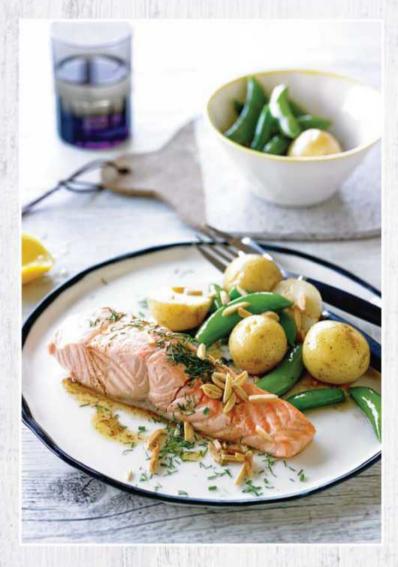
steamed rice and toasted sesame seeds to serve

Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Season the pork on both sides with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cook the pork for 3 minutes each side or until cooked to your liking. Remove and set aside to rest for 3 minutes.

Serve the pork with the kimchi and rice, scattered with sesame seeds.







DILL POACHED SALMON WITH BROWN BUTTER VEGETABLES

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 25 minutes

1 lemon, cut into wedges
½ teaspoon black peppercorns
1 teaspoon salt
2 cloves garlic, bruised
½ cup (125ml) white wine
handful of dill sprigs
12 new potatoes
4 x 180g skinned and boned salmon fillets
250g sugar snap peas
40g butter
60g slivered almonds, toasted

Squeeze half the lemon wedges into a large saucepan, then add the lemon shells, along with the peppercorns, salt, garlic, wine, three-quarters of the dill and 1.5 litres water, stirring to combine. Add the potatoes, then place the saucepan over medium-high heat and bring to the boil.

Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook for 15 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Remove the potatoes with a slotted spoon and set aside. Reduce the heat to mediumlow and add the salmon to the saucepan. Gently poach for 5 minutes or until just cooked through. Remove to a plate with a slotted spoon (the salmon will continue to cook once removed from the stock).

Meanwhile, cook the sugar snap peas in a saucepan of boiling salted water for 2 minutes, then drain and refresh under cold running water. Melt the butter in a frying pan over medium heat. Cook for about 3 minutes or until it turns golden and has a nutty aroma. Add the potatoes and sugar snaps to the pan and toss to coat in the butter. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serve the salmon with the brown butter vegetables, scattered with the almonds and the remaining chopped dill, with the remaining lemon wedges on the side.







PRAWN & TOFU SPRING STIR-FRY

SERVES 4

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
12 green prawns, peeled, deveined, tails left intact
1 bunch Chinese broccoli, cut into 5cm lengths
4 asparagus spears, trimmed, cut into 5cm lengths
2cm ginger, peeled, finely grated
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 teaspoon ground white pepper
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon white sugar
¼ cup oyster sauce
300g medium tofu, drained on paper towels, cubed 3cm steamed brown rice and thinly sliced

Heat half the oil in a wok or large frying pan over high heat. Season the prawns with salt, then stir-fry for 3 minutes until lightly golden. Remove and set aside.

Heat the remaining oil in the wok. Stir-fry the broccoli and asparagus for 1-2 minutes, then add the ginger and garlic and stir-fry for a further minute. Add the white and black pepper, sugar and oyster sauce and mix to combine, then carefully add the tofu and prawns and cook for 2 minutes or until warmed through, taking care not to break up the tofu too much. Serve on brown rice, sprinkled with chilli. *





red chilli to serve

(use gluten-free oyster sauce)

CREDITS Paper Series coloured rim plates and bowls, and white dinner plates and pasta bowls all by Hayden Youlley; handmade white glazed dinner plate and rustic cheese platter board by Susan Simonini; dark grey and birchwood placemats from KeepResin Homewares; small flared slate and citrus bowls from Mud Australia. For full details, see Credits Index.



sweet spot Baking expert ALICE ARNDELL gets creative with coconut. Recipes and food styling **Alice Arndell** / Photography and styling **Tamara West** OLD-FASHIONED COCONUT **MACAROONS**



The rich, slightly sweet flavour of coconut works brilliantly in baking, from the indulgence of coconut macaroons dipped in dark chocolate to a lunchbox-filling coconut and banana bread that's free of gluten, dairy and refined sugar. Coconut oil is an easy substitute for butter and other oils in recipes, making it a great ingredient for those avoiding dairy.

COCONUT BANANA BREAD

MAKES 1 LOAF

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 50 minutes

This moist, delicious banana loaf is also free from gluten, dairy and refined sugar. It's a great addition to school lunchboxes and keeps well. To make it nut-free as well, swap the ground almonds for an additional 2 tablespoons of coconut flour – the resulting loaf won't be quite as light, but it will still taste great.

4 eggs

4 ripe bananas, mashed (about 1½ cups)

3 tablespoons runny honey or maple syrup

100g coconut oil, melted

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 cup coconut flour

½ cup ground almonds

11/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon salt

Preheat the oven to 170°C, then butter (or oil) and line a 22cm x 11cm loaf tin with baking paper, leaving a generous overhang at the ends to lift the finished loaf out.

Put the eggs, bananas, honey or maple syrup, oil and vanilla extract in a large bowl and mix well to combine. Add the coconut flour, ground almonds, baking powder, baking soda and salt and stir until well combined. Pour the batter into the prepared tin (it will seem quite runny) and stand for 5 minutes to allow the coconut flour to swell.

Bake for 45-50 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the centre of the loaf comes out with just a few small crumbs clinging to it (if the loaf is browning too much after 30 minutes, cover loosely with foil for the remainder of the cooking time).

Cool in the tin for 10 minutes then lift out and cool completely on a wire rack before slicing. Store wrapped in plastic wrap at room temperature for up to 1 week.



Baker's Note

Coconut flour is much more absorbent than wheat flour so you don't need anywhere near as much. Because of this, you can't simply substitute it for regular flour in baking, so it's best to use recipes designed specifically for coconut flour. Look for coconut flour in either the baking aisle of your supermarket, or with the gluten-free foods.

OLD-FASHIONED COCONUT MACAROONS

MAKES ABOUT 20 MACAROONS

Preparation 35 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

4 egg whites

3/4 cup caster sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
5 cups shredded coconut
150g dark chocolate, melted

Place an oven rack in the bottom third of the oven and preheat the oven to 160°C. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Put the egg whites, sugar, vanilla extract and salt in a large bowl and whisk for about 30 seconds or until foamy and the sugar is well combined with the egg whites. Stir in the coconut until well combined. It will seem like there is too much coconut, but keep mixing and it will all come together.

Stand for 10 minutes to let the coconut absorb the liquid, then mix well again.

Use wet hands to shape small handfuls of the mix into ping pong ball-sized rounds, squeezing firmly to compact the coconut. Arrange on the prepared tray with about 3cm space around each macaroon. Do not press down.

Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden. Cool on the tray for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Dip the bases of the cooled macaroons into the melted chocolate, then rest upside down while the chocolate sets. Once set, store, loosely covered, at room temperature for up to 3 days (if you place them in an airtight container, the moisture from the centre of the macaroons will make the outsides go soft).



Baker's Note

For extra toasty macaroons, toast the coconut first. Spread out in a thin layer on a lined baking tray and bake at 150°C until it just starts to colour. Remove from the tray (or it will keep cooking) and cool completely before adding to the egg white mixture.

OATY COCONUT & LEMON SLICE

MAKES ABOUT 16 PIECES

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

2½ cups wholegrain or jumbo oats (not the quick-cook kind)
½ cups desiccated coconut
⅓ cup coconut flour
⅓ teaspoons baking powder
⅓ teaspoon salt
200g coconut oil, melted
⅙ cup runny honey or golden syrup
2 eggs
finely grated zest of 3 lemons

Preheat the oven to 170°C and line a 22cm x 32cm slice tin with baking paper, leaving a generous overhang at each end.

Put the oats, coconut, coconut flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl and stir well to combine. Set aside. In a separate bowl, whisk together the melted coconut oil, honey or golden syrup, eggs and lemon zest until combined, then add to the dry ingredients and mix thoroughly. The mixture will seem quite wet.

Press the mixture evenly and firmly into the base of the prepared tin, then bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Set aside to cool completely in the tin.

Lemon & coconut icing

1 cup icing sugar, sifted 2 tablespoons coconut oil, at room temperature 2-3 tablespoons lemon juice 1/3 cup coconut chips or thread coconut, toasted

Put the icing sugar, coconut oil and 2 tablespoons of lemon juice in a small bowl and mix until smooth. Add more lemon juice if the icing is too stiff – it should drizzle off your spoon in a smooth ribbon. Transfer the icing to a piping bag fitted with a small plain nozzle (or into a sealable plastic bag with the corner snipped off). Drizzle over the cold slice then sprinkle with coconut. Allow to set then cut into pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.



Baker's Note

Oats do not naturally contain any gluten so technically this recipe is gluten-free. However, some people on a gluten-free diet may not be able to eat oats as they do contain a protein similar to gluten (avenin) that some people still react to. In addition, they are often contaminated with gluten during processing and packaging. So if you are coeliac (or baking for someone who is), Coeliac NZ recommends avoiding oats altogether.

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GOLDEN KIWIFRUIT & COCONUT UPSIDE-DOWN CAKES

MAKES 12 CAKES

Preparation 20 minutes Cooking 20 minutes

Golden kiwifruit has a tropical pineappley-passionfruity flavour that complements coconut incredibly well. Serve these delicate little cakes for afternoon tea or with a generous spoonful of whipped cream for dessert.

3 golden kiwifruit, ripe but firm (substitute with green kiwifruit) 75g butter, melted 2 tablespoons brown sugar ½ cup shredded coconut, toasted 75g coconut oil, at room temperature ½ cup caster sugar 2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract finely grated zest of 2 limes

1 cup flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

½ cup coconut cream



Baker's Notes

- Coconut oil is a soft solid at room temperature so is easy to combine with sugar by hand. If it's a bit firm, heat in the microwave on high in 10-second bursts.
- If you prefer to make this recipe completely dairy-free, you can replace the butter with coconut oil. However, bear in mind that this will result in slightly less caramelised cake tops.

CREDITS Wonki Ware plates from Peonies Home and Living; small dishes from Factory Ceramics; paint background Blue Night from Resene. For full details, see Credits Index.



Preheat the oven to 160°C and butter or oil a 12-hole muffin tin well. Cut the ends off the kiwifruit, then thinly slice the peel off the sides. Cut each kiwifruit into 4 thick slices. Divide the melted butter evenly among the muffin tin holes then sprinkle with the brown sugar and half the shredded coconut.



Put a slice of kiwifruit on top of the coconut and brown sugar in each muffin tin hole. Set aside. Put the coconut oil and caster sugar in a bowl and mix until smooth.



Add the eggs, vanilla extract and lime zest to the coconut oil mixture and mix well to combine.



Fold the flour, baking powder and salt into the coconut oil mixture, then stir in the coconut cream until smooth.



Spoon the batter evenly among the muffin tin holes, on top of the kiwifruit, then sprinkle with the remaining ½ cup coconut. Bake for 18-22 minutes or until the cakes spring back when lightly pressed.



Cool in the tin for 10 minutes, then turn out onto a wire rack, with the kiwifruit on top of the cakes. Serve warm or cool completely, then store in an airtight container for up to three days. *



COOKING FOR 2

EMMA BOYD has great recipe suggestions to serve two.

Don't need to feed an army at dinnertime? We've come up with inspiring new ideas for two (or one, with leftovers for lunch the next day). Whether you're planning a meat-free Monday, want flavourpacked but time-saving options for midweek or are looking for a dish to take your time over this weekend, we've got you covered.

> Recipes and food styling Emma Boyd Photography Jason Creaghan Styling Fiona Lascelles



COOKING FOR 2



PISTACHIO CRUMBED FISH WITH QUINOA SPRING SALAD

SERVES 2

Preparation 20 minutes Cooking 10 minutes

1/4 cup pistachio nuts, finely chopped 1/4 cup panko crumbs 1/4 cup finely grated parmesan 1/4 cup flour 1 egg, lightly beaten 1/3 cup quinoa

1 shallot, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon red wine vinegar 100g sugar snap peas, ends trim

100g sugar snap peas, ends trimmed 100g green beans, ends trimmed, cut into 3cm pieces on the diagonal

2 radishes, thinly sliced
½ cup mint leaves, finely chopped
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
3 heaped tablespoons (60g) ricotta

1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic chives 2 fillets skinless and boneless white fish 1 tablespoon butter

Combine the pistachios, panko crumbs and parmesan. Season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, then put on a plate. Put the flour on another plate and the egg in a bowl. Set aside.

Cook the quinoa following the packet directions. Meanwhile, put the shallot in a small bowl, pour over the vinegar and set aside while you prepare the rest of the salad. Put the peas and the beans in a heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Stand for 2 minutes, then drain and cool under cold running water. Transfer to a bowl. Add the cooked quinoa to the peas and beans, along with the radishes, mint, shallot and vinegar. Pour the oil over everything and season, then mix gently.

Put the ricotta, feta and chives in a bowl and season with pepper. Using a stick blender, blend until smooth.

Pat the fish dry with paper towels, then dust with the flour. Dip in the egg, then coat with the pistachio crumb, pressing it on with your fingertips to ensure the fish is well coated.

Melt the butter in a frying pan over medium-high heat, then fry the fish for 2-3 minutes each side or until golden and cooked through. Serve with the quinoa salad and whipped feta.

WINE A medium-dry riesling with a touch of bottle age – try Kahurangi Estate Nelson Riesling 2011.







THE SEASONAL COOK

For most chefs, spring is the most exciting time of year. After what can feel like a very long winter, the promise of spring produce is something to look forward to; a reward after the cold and dark months. In New Zealand, spring is probably our only really distinctive season as many of the vegetables are so fleeting – you really have to make the most of the produce because things like globe artichokes and spring peas are here and gone so quickly. We have a small asparagus bed at the farm, and also grow borlotti beans, broad beans, peas and lots of other good things. Our radishes take off when it starts getting warm, but before it gets too hot. Spring is the season you want to celebrate.

ROAST LAMB WITH PEA & SPRING ONION PUREE & SNOW PEAS

SERVES 6

Preparation 30 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

6 sprigs thyme, leaves picked ½ cup olive oil 2 tablespoons lemon juice 1kg-1.5kg boned lamb leg, trimmed of excess fat and sinew, cut into 6 pieces 100g fresh peas or defrosted frozen peas 100g spring onions, chopped into 1cm pieces ½ cup mint leaves 1/2 cup flat-leafed parsley leaves 500g snow peas or sugar snap peas, tails and strings removed ½ red onion, thinly sliced 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard 30ml red wine vinegar pea flowers and young pea leaves to garnish

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Combine the thyme, 4 tablespoons of the olive oil and the lemon juice and season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Rub the lamb pieces all over with the mixture. Heat a large frying pan over high heat and brown the lamb, in batches, on all sides, then transfer to a roasting dish and roast in the oven for 12-15 minutes for medium. Remove from the dish and set aside to rest, covered with foil, while you prepare the rest of the meal.

Put a further 1 tablespoon of oil in a saucepan with 50ml water. Heat until boiling, then add the peas and spring onions. Cook for 2 minutes then remove from the heat and pour into a blender. Add half the mint and parsley and blend until smooth, then taste and season.

Quickly blanch the snow peas or sugar snap peas in boiling water for 30 seconds, then drain and toss together with the onion, mustard, vinegar and remaining oil. Season and add the remaining herbs, tossing to combine.

Slice the lamb across the grain and arrange on 6 plates, then spoon on the pea puree and the snow pea mixture. Garnish with pea flowers and leaves, then serve. > WINE A vivacious pinot noir such as Jules Taylor Wines Marlborough Pinot Noir 2013.





GRILLED RADISHES & BABY GEM WITH WINT DRESSING & SOFT EGG

SERVES 6

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 15 minutes

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
60ml extra virgin olive oil
1 small clove garlic, crushed
pinch of raw sugar
1/4 cup chopped mint leaves, plus extra coarsely

torn leaves to garnish

2 anchovy fillets, finely chopped (optional, but they'll

2 anchovy fillets, finely chopped (optional, but they'll add an extra depth of flavour)

6 eggs

500g radishes (use a mixture of varieties if you can)
10 baby gem lettuce, halved lengthwise, leaves and
hearts separated, washed and drained well
2 tablespoons olive oil

Put the vinegar, extra virgin olive oil, garlic, sugar, mint and anchovies (if using) in a bowl and whisk to combine. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Put the eggs in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Cover and bring to the boil over high heat then reduce the heat to medium and simmer gently for 3 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to remove the eggs from the pan and cool under cold running water. Set aside.

Wash the radishes, then slice half the radishes into quarters or halves (depending on how big they are). Cut the remaining radishes into paper-thin slices, using a mandoline if you have one.

Preheat a barbecue hot plate or large frying pan over high heat. Drizzle the baby gem hearts and radish quarters (or halves) with the olive oil and season, then cook, cut sides down, until they just start to catch and brown. Remove from the heat immediately so they still retain some crunch.

Peel the eggs, then arrange the cooked baby gem hearts and radishes on serving plates. Add the baby gem leaves and radish slices, then spoon over the mint dressing and top with the soft-boiled eggs. Season the eggs with flaky sea salt, then garnish with mint.

A zesty, herbal Marlborough sauvignon blanc – try Ribbonwood Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc 2014.

SCALLOPS WITH PANCETTA MORNAY & PEA SALSA

SERVES 6

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

300g baby peas, fresh or frozen
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
600g fresh New Zealand scallops, roe on or off
(whichever you prefer), cleaned
200g pancetta, diced
2 tablespoons flour
1½ cups milk, heated
20g grated parmesan
½ red onion, finely diced
zest and juice of 1 lemon
60ml extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 tablespoon chopped mint
small fennel fronds to serve

Blanch the peas in boiling salted water for 1 minute, then drain and cool under cold running water. Set aside.

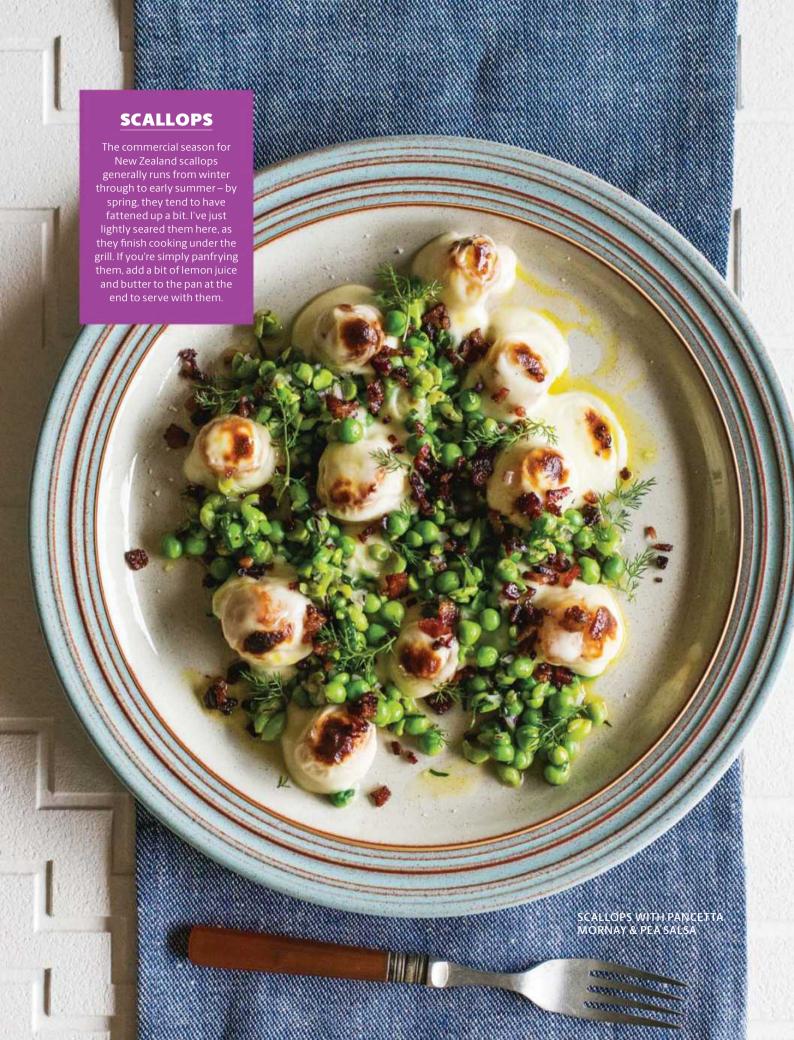
Heat the vegetable oil in a frying pan until smoking hot. Sear the scallops for 20 seconds each side then remove and arrange on ovenproof serving plates.

Put a frying pan over low heat and gently fry the pancetta for 10 minutes or until crisp. Use a slotted spoon to remove the pancetta, reserving the fat, and drain on paper towels.

Preheat the oven grill to 250°C. Keep the pancetta fat in the frying pan and increase the heat to medium, then add the flour and stir to combine. Gradually pour in the hot milk, a little at a time, whisking continually after each addition. Once all the milk has been added, simmer, whisking, for a further 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat and stir in the parmesan, then taste and season with salt and white pepper. Pour a thin layer of the sauce over the scallops on each plate, then place under the grill for 5 minutes or until lightly golden.

Meanwhile, combine the peas, onion, lemon zest and juice, extra virgin olive oil, parsley and mint in a bowl, crushing the peas gently with your hands to crack them open. Season then spoon the pea salsa around the scallops. Garnish with fennel.

> WINE A light, minerally chardonnay such as the Villa Maria Cellar Selection Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014.



THE SEASONAL COOK

HAM HOCKS WITH BROAD BEANS & GREEN GARLIC

SERVES 6

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 2 hours 20 minutes

3 ham hocks, split lengthwise (ask your butcher to do this

- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 carrot, peeled, coarsely chopped
- 1 stick celery, coarsely chopped
- 1 bouquet garni (made of a sprig of thyme, a few bay leaves and a sprig of parsley, tied together with string)
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 250g green garlic or garlic shoots, chopped (substitute with thinly sliced white part of leek if you can't get hold of green garlic)

1kg broad beans, podded if fresh, blanched, peeled 30ml cider vinegar

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1/4 cup chopped flat-leafed parsley young broad bean leaves to serve (optional)

Combine the ham hocks, onion, carrot, celery and bouquet garni in a large saucepan. Cover with water then simmer over low heat for 2 hours or until the meat is tender and just about falling off the bone. Remove the hocks from the saucepan while still hot and set aside on a rack to steam dry. Discard the vegetables and bouquet garni, reserving the liquid for stock to make soup another time.

Preheat the oven grill to 220°C. Put the ham hocks on a baking tray and grill for 5-10 minutes or until the skin is crisp. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat, then add the green garlic or leek and fry for 10 minutes or until softened. Add the broad beans and fry, stirring, for 1 minute to heat through. Add the vinegar, mustard and parsley, stirring to combine. Taste and season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Serve the ham hocks with the broad beans and green garlic, garnished with broad bean leaves if available.

> WINE A smoky, ample chardonnay. Go for Clearview Estate Beachhead Chardonnay 2014.

SPRING CARROTS WITH SEARED BEEF & GINGER & TANGELO DRESSING

SERVES 6

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 35 minutes

1kg baby carrots, leafy tops trimmed and reserved
200g baby onions or shallots, peeled, halved lengthwise
1 sprig rosemary
75ml vegetable oil
600g scotch fillet, cut into 2 steaks
5cm piece ginger, peeled, grated
250ml tangelo juice (from about 3-4 tangelos,
substitute with orange juice)
½ teaspoon Dijon mustard

30ml extra virgin olive oil 2 tablespoons black sesame seeds, toasted, to garnish

Put a heavy roasting tray in the oven and preheat the oven to 200°C. Combine the carrots, onions or shallots, rosemary and 2 tablespoons of the vegetable oil in a bowl, tossing to combine. Tip the mixture into the hot roasting dish, arranging the vegetables in a single layer and the onions cut sides down. Roast for 20 minutes or until the carrots and onions have coloured and are tender.

Meanwhile, season the steaks well all over with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Heat a further 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil in a large ovenproof frying pan over high heat and brown the steaks on all sides, then transfer to the 200°C oven and cook for a further 5 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside to rest.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons vegetable oil in a saucepan over low heat. Add the ginger and fry, stirring, for 5 minutes or until softened, then add the tangelo juice and simmer until reduced by three-quarters. Remove from the heat, stir in the mustard and extra virgin olive oil and season.

Slice the beef across the grain and arrange on plates with the roasted carrots, onions broken into petals, and reserved carrot tops. Spoon the ginger and tangelo dressing over the top, then sprinkle with the toasted sesame seeds.

> WINE A floral-scented, velvety syrah. We recommend Selaks Reserve Hawke's Bay Syrah 2013.









CITRUS MERINGUE TART

SERVES 12

Preparation 40 minutes (plus 90 minutes pastry chilling time) Cooking 45 minutes

Sweet shortcrust pastry

240g salted butter, cubed 120g icing sugar 330g flour

Combine the butter and sugar in the bowl of a cake mixer. Using the paddle attachment, beat until light and fluffy. Sift in the flour, then mix on slow speed until just combined into a soft dough. Tip the pastry out onto a floured bench and press into a flat disc, then wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Roll out the pastry on a floured bench into a large, 3mm-thick disc then use it to line a deep, 24cm-diameter tart tin with a loose base. Freeze for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line the tart with baking paper and fill with baking weights or raw rice or beans, then blind bake for 20 minutes. Remove the paper and weights and bake for a further 10 minutes or until golden and firm to the touch. Cool to room temperature.

Citrus curd

250ml grapefruit, lemon, orange or lime juice 3 teaspoons citrus zest from the above fruit 450g sugar 250g unsalted butter, cubed 12 eggs, lightly beaten

Combine the citrus juice, zest, sugar and butter in a large saucepan over low heat and heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter has melted and the sugar dissolved. Whisk in the eggs and increase the heat to medium, then stir constantly for about 25 minutes or until the curd thickens and coats the back of a spoon. Remove from the heat and cool to room temperature then pour into the cooled tart base and refrigerate.

For the meringue & to serve

4 egg whites 200g caster sugar

Beat the egg whites until soft peaks form, then add the sugar, one-third at a time, beating well after each addition to dissolve the sugar before adding the next amount. Continue to beat until the meringue is thick and glossy, with firm peaks and no sugar crystals remaining.

Preheat the oven to 190°C fan bake. Spoon the meringue over the chilled tart, spreading it out evenly and creating peaks for texture. Bake for 10 minutes or until the meringue is coloured and cooked through. Cool to room temperature then refrigerate for 1 hour before serving.

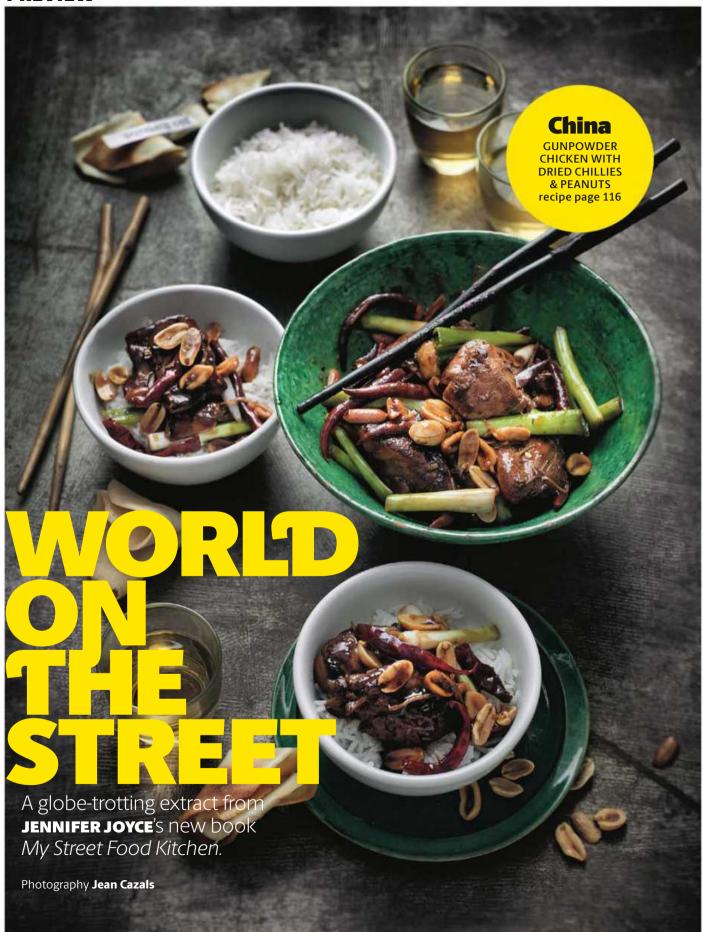
A medium-style riesling such as Ribbonwood Marlborough Riesling 2014. *

CREDITS Dinner plates from Steiner Ceramics; Thomas Sunny Day plate from Smith & Caughey's. For full details, see Credits Index.



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CAULIFLOWER & TOMATO CURRY

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 45 minutes

This curry is from India's Gujarat state, which has a predominantly vegetarian population. The tomato sauce, with flecks of coconut and spices, gets its zing from tamarind, a signature flavour in their cuisine. Midweek I do use ready-made curry pastes and spice mixtures such as garam masala, but this is one dish that especially benefits from freshly toasted and ground spices.

1 teaspoon coriander seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 teaspoon fennel seeds

1 dried long red chilli (Kashmiri chilli, if available)

2 onions, 1 quartered, 1 thinly sliced

3 cloves garlic, chopped

5cm piece ginger, peeled, sliced

 ${\small 2\ thumb-sized\ green\ chillies,1\ halved\ and\ deseeded,}\\$

1 thinly sliced

11/2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric

2 teaspoons black or yellow mustard seeds

400ml tomato passata (pureed tomatoes)

50g tamarind puree (see page 27)

250ml (1 cup) vegetable stock

2 tablespoons desiccated (shredded) coconut

1 cauliflower (about 500g), cut into florets

steamed rice, coriander leaves and fresh mango chutney (see recipe at right) to serve

Put the coriander seeds, cumin seeds, fennel seeds and the dried chilli in a small frying pan and dry-fry, shaking, over medium heat for 40 seconds or until fragrant. Transfer the toasted spices to a spice grinder and process until fine. Set aside.

Put the quartered onion, garlic, ginger and halved green chilli in a blender or food processor and puree until smooth.

Heat the oil in a heavy-based saucepan over medium heat. Add the sliced onion and the pureed onion mixture and season well. Cook, stirring, for 10-12 minutes until golden. Add the ground spices, turmeric and mustard seeds and cook for another 2 minutes or until the mustard seeds begin to pop. Add the tomato passata, tamarind puree, stock and coconut and bring to the boil. Add the cauliflower, reduce heat to low, then simmer for 25 minutes or until the cauliflower is knife tender.

Serve the curry scattered with coriander leaves and the sliced green chilli, with steamed rice and fresh mango chutney on the side.

GET AHEAD You can make the curry base the day before but don't add the cauliflower. Cool the mixture, then cover and refrigerate. Gently reheat it in a saucepan and, when it is simmering, add the cauliflower and cook until tender, as above.

FRESH MANGO CHUTNEY

MAKES 250ML (1 CUP)

Preparation 10 minutes

Best served on the day of making.

1 mango, peeled, diced ½ green chilli, deseeded, diced ½ small red onion, thinly sliced juice of 1 lime ½ teaspoon ground cumin

Combine all the ingredients with a pinch of salt in a bowl.

BLACK VINEGAR BRAISED PORK BELLY WITH PICKLED CHILLIES

SERVES 6

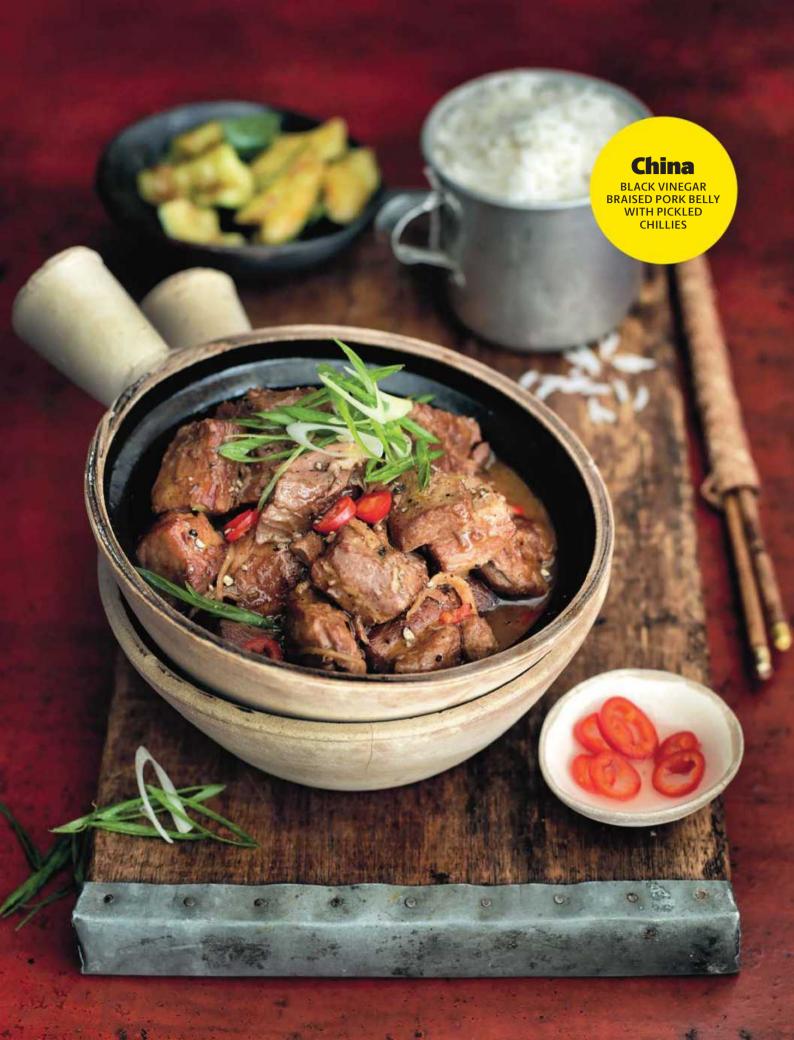
Preparation 25 minutes (plus 1 hour marinating) Cooking 2 hours 10 minutes

Based on the classic Chinese "red-cooked pork", this version is just a little more special. Chinese black vinegar breaks up the richness and isn't as sour as other vinegars: it's more of a malted, sweet taste. It's perfect for slow-braising pork belly. Although it seems like a large amount of meat, it shrinks quite a bit while cooking. Eat it with steamed rice and pickled red chillies and take your pork love to new heights.

1.3kg skinless boneless pork belly
2 tablespoons soy sauce
200ml Shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry
1½ tablespoons vegetable oil
2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
5cm piece ginger, peeled, julienned
pinch of chilli flakes
100ml Chinese black vinegar*
150g (¾ cup firmly packed) soft brown sugar
700ml vegetable stock
2 long red or bird's eye chillies, sliced
50ml rice wine vinegar
toasted sesame seeds, julienned spring onions, smacked cucumber pickles (see recipe over page) and steamed rice to serve

Cut the pork into 5cm pieces and put it in a bowl. Add 1 tablespoon each of the soy sauce and Shaoxing rice wine, toss to combine, then cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or overnight if time permits.

Heat half of the vegetable oil in a heavy-based saucepan over high heat. Cook the pork, in batches, until brown on both sides, then remove from the pan and set aside. Add the remaining oil and cook the garlic, ginger and chilli flakes for 1-2 minutes or until golden. Add the black vinegar, sugar, stock and the remaining soy sauce and rice wine and bring to the boil. Return the pork



"How better to immerse oneself in the culture of a place than to eat on the street among the locals? It never fails to delight me. Street food is immediate, vibrant and not necessarily subtle. It thrills us with its crunch, spice, sweetness, saltiness or sour tang"

to the pan, reduce the heat to low, then cover and simmer for $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 hours until the meat is tender. During the final half hour, remove the lid to allow the liquid to reduce.

Meanwhile, to make the pickled chillies, put the sliced chilli and rice wine vinegar in a small bowl and stand for 1 hour.

Serve the pork scattered with toasted sesame seeds, spring onions and pickled chillies, accompanied by steamed rice and smacked cucumber pickles. * Also known as chinkiang vinegar. Chinese black vinegar is used frequently in the Sichuan and Southern regions. Its smoky flavour adds a delicious sour depth to braises and dipping sauces. It is sold in some supermarkets and most Asian grocery stores. If you can't get it, substitute balsamic vinegar. **GET AHEAD** The entire dish and the pickled chillies can be made 2 days ahead, covered and refrigerated. Reheat in a covered saucepan over low heat until warm. **FAST OR SLOW COOKING** You can cook this quickly in a pressure cooker in 30 minutes. Make it in 2 batches, as you should never fill the pot more than half full. You can also cook it on the 4-hour setting in a slow cooker.

SMACKED CUCUMBER PICKLES

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 10 minutes

These tangy instant pickles take just minutes to make, and will complement many spicy dishes.

1 telegraph (long) cucumber or 3 Lebanese (short) cucumbers, ends trimmed

3 teaspoons finely chopped garlic

11/2 tablespoons caster sugar

3 teaspoons light soy sauce

1½ tablespoons Chinese black vinegar or rice wine vinegar

11/2 tablespoons chilli oil

1 teaspoon salt

Using a rolling pin or the flat side of a cleaver blade, smack the cucumbers so they split. Chop them into 2.5cm pieces and put them in a bowl with the remaining ingredients. Toss together well and serve. **GET AHEAD** The pickles can be made 2 hours before serving, then covered and refrigerated.

COCONUT & TAMARIND SALMON **CURRY WITH MUSTARD SEEDS**

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 25 minutes

The coconut-based curries of India's south are lush with fresh seafood and chillies. They're the kind of dishes that linger in your mind after your travels. This one is very quick to make and puts an exotic dinner on the table in less than 30 minutes. Try the same creamy base with chicken or chunks of fresh white fish for a light and easy meal.

2 tablespoons desiccated (shredded) coconut

1½ tablespoons vegetable oil

1 large onion, halved, thinly sliced into half moons

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 thumb-sized green chilli, deseeded, sliced

3cm piece ginger, peeled, finely chopped

2 teaspoons ground cumin

2 teaspoons ground coriander

1 teaspoon ground turmeric

2 teaspoons black mustard seeds

100g tamarind puree (see page 27)

1 tablespoon tomato paste

400ml can coconut milk

500g skinless salmon fillet (pinbones removed),

cut into 6cm pieces

10 curry leaves (optional)

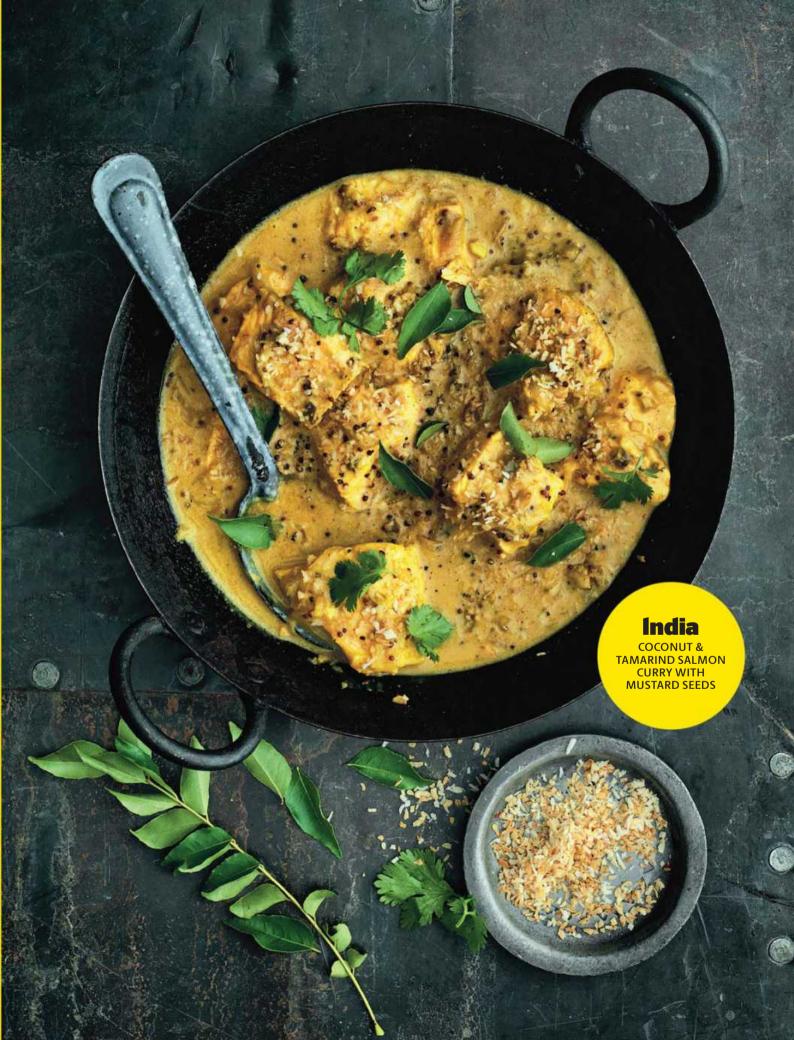
steamed basmati rice and chopped coriander leaves to serve

Preheat the oven to 160°C or 140°C fan forced. Spread the coconut on a baking tray and toast for 3-4 minutes or until the edges turn golden. Remove and transfer to a bowl.

Heat the vegetable oil in a large saucepan over mediumhigh heat. Add the onion, garlic, chilli and ginger and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cook for 10 minutes or until golden and soft. Add the spices and cook for 1-2 minutes or until the mustard seeds pop. Add the tamarind puree, tomato paste, coconut milk, toasted coconut and 60ml (1/4 cup) of water and simmer for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened.

Just before serving, add the salmon pieces and curry leaves, if using. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until just cooked to your liking. Serve with steamed basmati rice and chopped coriander.

GET AHEAD The base for the curry can be made the day before, then covered and refrigerated. Gently reheat before serving and add the fish when it comes to a simmer.



PREVIEW

GUNPOWDER CHICKEN WITH DRIED CHILLIES & PEANUTS

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 20 minutes (plus 1 hour marinating) Cooking 15 minutes

Better known as kung pao, this blistering Sichuan stir-fry is a takeaway classic just about anywhere. Black vinegar and dark soy sauce zip up the sauce and the salty peanuts give it crunch. I've kept the dried chillies pretty middle ground. Not all of us want to sweat through our dinner so adjust them depending on your heat tolerance. The chillies are solely there to infuse flavour: be sure to leave them in large pieces so no one accidentally eats one!

8 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, quartered

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 tablespoon Shaoxing rice wine

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

10 dried long red chillies, stems and seeds removed

1 bunch spring onions, cut into 2.5cm pieces

40g (1/4 cup) whole roasted peanuts

1 heaped teaspoon Sichuan peppercorns, ground steamed rice to serve

Sauce

60ml (1/4 cup) soy sauce

60ml (¼ cup) Chinese black vinegar or red rice vinegar 60ml (¼ cup) chicken stock

1 tablespoon Shaoxing rice wine or dry sherry

2 teaspoons caster sugar

2 teaspoons cornflour, mixed with 1 tablespoon water

Combine the chicken, soy sauce and Shaoxing rice wine in a bowl, cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, to make the sauce, combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

Heat half the vegetable oil in a large wok over high heat. Cook the chicken, in batches, until golden all over, then set aside. Add the remaining oil and cook the chillies for 1 minute, shaking the wok constantly. Return the chicken to the wok, add the spring onions, peanuts and ground Sichuan pepper and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add the sauce and cook for another 1-2 minutes or until reduced and thickened. Serve immediately with steamed rice.

GET AHEAD On the morning of serving you can marinate the chicken, make the sauce, prepare the remaining ingredients and refrigerate everything until ready to stir-fry just before serving.

STICKY DATE CAKE WITH PISTACHIO BRITTLE & CARDAMOM TOFFEE SAUCE

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 15 minutes (plus 10 minutes soaking) Cooking 55 minutes

Cardamom and caramel make a formidable sauce for this pillow-soft cake studded with chopped dates. Scoop some

ice cream or creme fraiche over it, sprinkle with the bashed brittle and indulge your friends after a Middle Eastern feast.

200g pitted dates, preferably soft medjool dates, finely chopped
80ml (1/3 cup) boiling water
100g unsalted butter, softened
220g (1 cup) caster sugar
2 eggs
175g plain (all-purpose) flour
11/2 teaspoons baking powder
60ml (1/4 cup) milk
ice cream to serve

Pistachio brittle

75g pistachio nut kernels, chopped 100g caster sugar

Cardamom toffee sauce

200g unsalted butter, chopped 250ml (1 cup) pure cream 350g soft dark brown (muscovado) sugar ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom

Preheat the oven to 180°C or 160°C fan forced. Lightly grease a 20cm square cake tin. Put the dates in a bowl and pour the boiling water over them. Set aside for 10 minutes or until the water is absorbed.

Using an electric mixer fitted with the beater attachment, beat the butter and caster sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Sift the flour and baking powder into the bowl, then stir in the milk and dates and continue stirring until well combined. Spoon the mixture into the prepared tin and bake for 40-50 minutes or until a skewer comes out clean. Remove from the oven and allow to stand while you prepare the sauce.

Meanwhile, to make the pistachio brittle, line a baking tray with baking paper and spread the nuts on the tray. Put the sugar in a heavy-based non-stick saucepan over medium heat. Don't stir, as it will cause the sugar to crystallise, simply tilt the pan when the sugar at the edge starts to go brown faster than the middle. When the sugar is evenly coloured to a light caramel, pour it over the nuts and stand for about 10 minutes to set. Break the brittle into pieces, making some quite fine and leaving others in larger pieces for serving.

To make the cardamom toffee sauce, put all of the ingredients in a heavy-based saucepan. Cook over low heat until the sugar dissolves, then increase the heat to medium and simmer rapidly for 5 minutes or until thick and dark. Serve the warm date cake and the hot toffee sauce with vanilla ice cream and a sprinkling of pistachio brittle.

GET AHEAD The cake can be made earlier in the day, cooled and covered with foil. The toffee sauce can be prepared 2 days before, then covered and refrigerated. Reheat just before serving. Make the brittle up to 3 days ahead and store in an airtight container. *



WHAT TO DO WITH



It's the third biggest crop in the world, just shy of maize and sugarcane, but unlike those crops, rice is used primarily as a food – it's the staple food for more than half the world's population. It was domesticated in China perhaps more than 10,000 years ago; from there it spread throughout Asia, into Europe via Egypt and Western Asia, then to the Americas with European colonisation in the 1500s. Most rice is still grown in Asia in a complex agricultural system relying heavily on natural flooding or irrigation.

he many varieties of rice are generally characterised by length of grain – short, medium or long, and within these groups there's a big range of texture. Rice with high levels of amylopectin, such as sushi rice and the glutinous black or white rice popular in Southeast Asia, is sticky when cooked. Starchy medium grain varieties like carnaroli and arborio give risotto its prized creaminess, while in Spain, bomba rice makes the best paella - it absorbs lots of liquid without getting sticky. In India, the grade of basmati is a serious matter, with long, intact grains prized. Wild rice, native to North America, is in fact the seed of an aquatic grass and not a direct relative of Asian rice. It's famed for its nutritional content and springy bite.

Basmati rice is the basis of infinite pilau and biryani dishes throughout South Asia and the Middle East. To make Arab rice, heat a few tablespoons of olive oil in a large saucepan, then fry a sliced onion and a few cloves of crushed garlic with a generous amount of spices (allspice, cumin, turmeric, black pepper and ground coriander) until deep golden. Stir in basmati rice and a handful of currants, then pour in enough light chicken stock to just cover the rice by about a finger-width. Cover with the lid and bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to low and cook for 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and stand, covered, for a further 10 minutes then fluff with a fork and scatter over several dabs of butter before serving.

Jasmine rice is a glutinous variety often used to make khao niew (sweet coconut sticky rice), or toasted and ground to add to Thai Isan salads as a textural element. For a fresh salmon larb, toast 1/4 cup (or more, it stores well) of glutinous jasmine rice in a dry frying pan until deep golden and fragrant. Grind to a powder in a spice or coffee grinder. Combine diced raw salmon fillet with finely sliced red onion, very thin rings of bashed lemongrass, loads of coarsely chopped herbs (mint, Thai basil, holy basil, coriander, Vietnamese mint) and finely sliced green chilli. Stir through the juice of 2 limes, 2 tablespoons fish sauce and 1/2 tablespoon grated palm sugar, then sprinkle with the rice powder and serve.

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Brown, red, wild rice and forbidden rice (a non-glutinous Chinese black rice) hold their texture well when cooked, making them great for salads. For a nutritious rice salad, combine cooked rice of your choice with very finely shredded kale or cavolo nero that has been massaged with a little olive oil, fresh sprouts of your choice, a little finely sliced spring onion and toasted pumpkin and sunflower seeds. Dress with a blend of sesame and extra virgin olive oils, lemon juice and a little orange juice, freshly crushed ginger and garlic, and season with salt and white pepper.

Medium grain white rice is good for side dishes and it's worth cooking extra so you can also make fried rice.

Kimchi bokkeumbap is a comforting, spicy Korean version. Take leftover rice from the fridge and fry in a smoking hot oiled wok with plenty of kimchi (chop any larger pieces with scissors), rehydrated or fresh shiitake mushrooms, mung bean sprouts, grated carrot and browned-off minced beef. Add a splash of Shaoxing rice wine, soy sauce, sesame oil and a little sugar. Add some beaten egg to one side of the wok to cook through then distribute through the rice. Serve topped with sliced spring onion, a drizzle of sesame oil and toasted seasoned seaweed (kim) for scooping up the rice with. * ANNA KING SHAHAB



- 1 Sushi rice
- 2 Wild rice
- 3 Medium grain white rice
- 4 Black glutinous rice
- 5 Red rice
- 6 Jasmine brown rice

FRESH TOUCH

Pair Marisco Vineyards' The King's Thorn Pinot Gris with this delicious spring recipe, starring 2015 *Cuisine* NZ Artisan Award Winner Urban Hippie Miso Paste.

Miso Fish & Spring Vegetable Parcels

Serves 4

12 baby carrots, peeled

4 small radishes, halved

8 thick asparagus spears, cut into 5cm pieces

70g sugar snap peas, strings removed

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 thick skinless and boneless salmon or white fish fillets (about 175g each)

2 tablespoons Urban Hippie miso paste ¼ cup Marisco The King's Thorn Pinot Gris 40g butter

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Bring a saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the carrots and radish and simmer for 3 minutes, then add the asparagus and sugar snap peas and drain immediately. Reserve.

Cut 4 large heart shapes out of baking paper –each should be about 50cm across at the widest part. Brush the paper liberally with olive oil, then place one piece of fish on half of each heart and season with freshly ground black pepper. Divide the carrots, radish, asparagus and peas evenly among the parcels, scattering them on top of the fish.

Combine the miso and wine in a small bowl, stirring well to combine. Drizzle the liquid evenly over the fish and vegetables, then divide the butter among the parcels.

Seal each parcel by folding the hearts in half, then folding and creasing the edges to enclose the salmon and vegetables, until the parcels are completely enclosed. Place the parcels on a baking tray and bake for 15 minutes.



MARLHOROUGH NEV

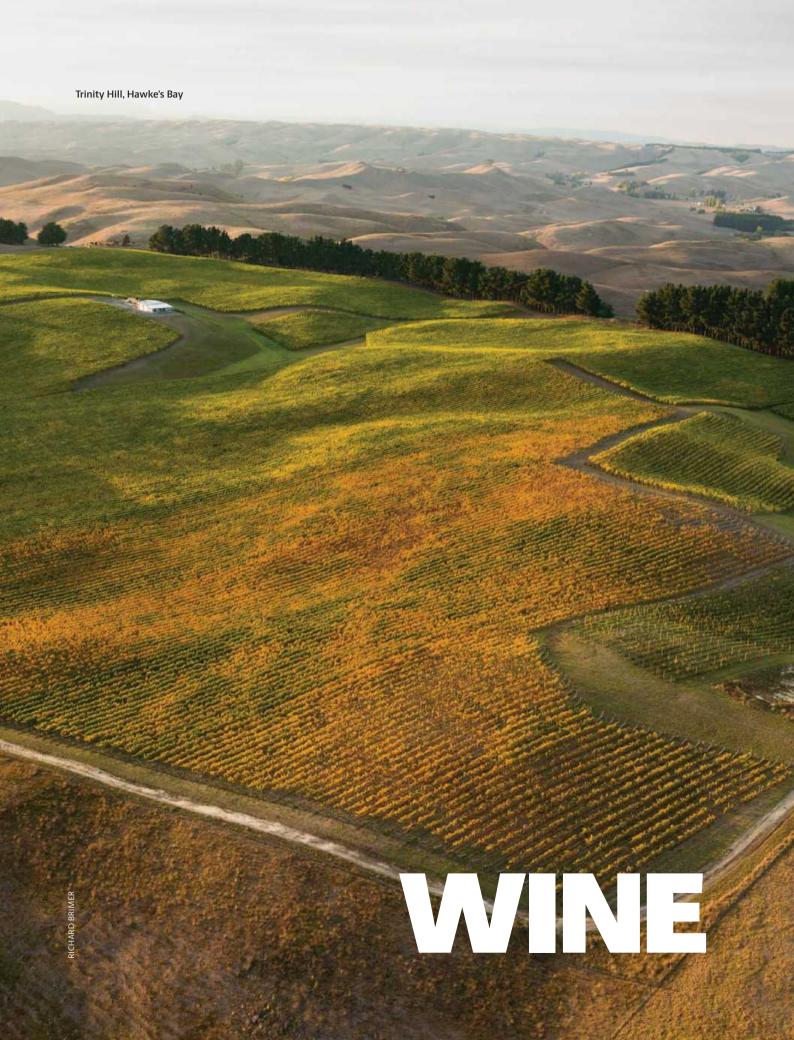
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Cheers!



WINE NEWS

BY JOHN SAKER

The latest from the world of wine

SMART & CRAFT



"It's a natural progression," says Marisco proprietor and chief winemaker Brent Marris about his label's new Craft Series. "It's using what we have in our vineyard, but taking a more artisan, experimental approach." Three varietals make up the initial Craft Series release – sauvignon blanc, viognier and pinot noir – with a chardonnay to follow.

Marris says pains were taken in fruit selection for each wine – "we haven't selected rows, but sites within rows" – and with the attention lavished in the winery.

For the sauvignon blanc, which is from the 2011 vintage and dubbed Pride & Glory, Marris had the wine resting on chardonnay lees for several months. "It's not about sauvignon blanc, it's about a textural,

interesting white wine, along the lines of a southern Rhone white blend."

Having been a player in Marlborough's rise to vinous prominence right from the beginning – he grew up in the region and his father was one of the first contract grape growers – Marris sees his new range and others like it as all part of "the maturing of Marlborough".

"Consistency is important for commercial brands, and consistency has helped bring the region to where it is today. The success of that has now allowed us to explore the vineyard deeper. This what the great wine countries of Europe have been doing for years and years."



TRY ANGLES

Zalto is a new-fangled – but more importantly, new-angled - range of Austrian stemware. The design of the glasses is all based around the three tilt angles of the earth -24° , 48° and 72° . Why? Because the Ancient Romans discovered that if they used these angles in the creation of their food storage vessels, the food stayed fresher for longer and tasted better. "The first thing you notice when you hold one is how beautifully balanced they are," says Kelly Brown of Foxes Island Wines, recently appointed New Zealand agents for Zalto. These elegant glasses are hand-blown, available in a range of styles (Bordeaux, Burgundy, Champagne and so on) and what's more, you can put them in the dishwasher. foxes-island.co.nz



AUCTION STATIONS

Four leading Hawk'es Bay winemakers are pooling their talents to create two special wines for the upcoming, revitalised Hawke's Bay Wine Auction, which raises funds for the Cranford Hospice. Kate Radburnd (Pask), Tony Bish (Sacred Hill), Alwyn Corban (Ngatarawa) and Peter Cowley (Te Mata) are making a red blend and a chardonnay that will be available for purchase. "We want to bottle the essence of the Bay and offer it to people who may miss out at the auction, but still want to make a contribution," says Radburnd. The auction takes place on 14 November at a new venue – the Hawke's Bay Opera House. hawkesbaywineauction.co.nz



CAPITAL GAIN

Glengarry's has just opened its biggest ever Wellington store, throwing open the doors in early August. Located at 53 Hutt Rd in Thorndon, it's taken over from the long-serving Thorndon Quay store, 600m down the road. The new outlet features a temperature-controlled cellar and a tasting room that can accommodate up to 60 people. "For the first time we can show off our entire fine wine range in Wellington," says Glengarry's general manager Liz Wheadon. "All the craft beer we stock is also available." glengarrywines.co.nz

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VINO & VERSE

Kiwi poet Sam Hunt is on the bottle – on several, in fact. In collaboration with La Cantina Wines, he's putting his name and face to a new range of Kiwi wines. Five varietals make up the Sam Hunt range and each will feature a fragment of the poet's verse. "Putting a poem on a wine label appeals to me," says Hunt. "It will give people something to read when they're having a drink. Wine and poetry do, after all, have a long and rich association." The poet enjoys his red, and has declared the Hawke's Bay merlot malbec to be his favourite Sam Hunt wine. lacantina.co.nz

Saint Clair's Ibbotson family



"This conference has given impetus to the goal of 20 per cent organic by 2020 – we will do everything to achieve that"

- Chairman of New Zealand Winegrowers Steve Green at the recent Organic and Biodynamic Winegrowing conference



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eastern promise

The albarino grape has found a niche in Gisborne, writes **CHARMIAN SMITH**.



f several fascinating new grape varieties in New Zealand, albarino is displaying particular promise, exciting winemakers around the country and especially capturing the imaginations of a group of grape growers in Gisborne.

The white variety originally hails from Galicia in the far north-west of Spain and neighbouring northern Portugal. It's a damp area of the Atlantic coast and the grape produces a fragrant wine with a whiff of the briny ocean, suggestions of citrus and stone fruit, and a crisp, dry finish.

Simon Nunns, the winemaker behind the Gisborne-grown Coopers Creek Bell-Ringer Albarino, says albarinos are distinctive wines that work well with seafood. "They remind us of sun, summer, seafood and sand between our toes." Nunns is excited because of the 55 or so grape varieties available to New Zealand wine growers, albarino appears to suit Gisborne well. It holds its acidity

which gives the wine length, focus and texture – that lovely crispness that makes it so food friendly.

Steve Voysey of Gisborne's Spade Oak says albarino's small, seedy berries and open bunches that are bullet-proof to cyclones mean it packs a lot of flavour and aroma. He also likes the fact that it's naturally low in alcohol without being sweet.

Grape growers Doug and Delwyn Bell, who grow the Bell-Ringer grapes, were the first in New Zealand to plant the variety. They initially planned to source the grape from Australia but because of quarantine difficulties instead ended up getting Spanish cuttings through Gisborne's Riversun nursery. Despite the delay this initially caused for the Bells, it turned out to be a lucky break – the vines the Australians had thought were albarino were later found to be savagnin blanc, a variety grown in France's Jura region.

Doug Bell says the couple were looking for unusual varieties to add interest to their commercial

chardonnay and viognier vineyard. Albarino ticked all the boxes: it was considered Spain's best white variety; was trendy overseas; went particularly well with seafood; was easy to pronounce; and appeared to suit Gisborne's climate and soils.

Hihi Wines' Andy Nimmo, who also produces an albarino, agrees that the variety has the X-factor. He thinks Gisborne's clay loam soils additionally give the grape richness. "Albarino is a beautiful wine which is well regarded in Europe. It certainly sells for high prices in London and is in short supply worldwide. The whole combination made me think it could be interesting to see how it goes in Gisborne and we might have something special."

Once people taste it, they love it, according to Matawhero's Kirsten Searle. She says its freshness means it appeals to sauvignon blanc drinkers, while it also offers something new to explore for those who are tired of sauvignon blanc.

Because there is still a lot to learn about growing and making albarino, the Gisborne producers, along with Villa Maria and Rod McDonald, have joined forces to share the results of their individual experiments and promote the variety.

Albarino certainly complements seafood but it also goes well with white meats and cheese – in fact, it's ideal with tapas-style dishes. Bryn Lewis, chef at The Vines restaurant at Gisborne's Bushmere Estate, served a lunch of small dishes to showcase the variety's versatility, including mussel and squid salad, crayfish bisque, gurnard saffron mousseline, chicken ballotine, a pig's head and hock terrine, and a local Waimata washed rind blue cheese.

Only about 25ha of albarino are planted in New Zealand, of which about 10ha are in Gisborne, but more brands are appearing with each vintage. It is typically fresh and lively with purity of fruit, and some weight and texture. It's delicious young, but it's also worth laying it down for a year or so to mellow it slightly. Keep an eye out for it – if the early Gisborne promise continues, this is one variety you might be seeing a lot more of. *

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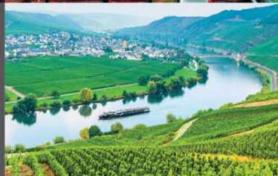


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diversity program

The numerous different styles of New Zealand chardonnay being produced made this tasting a fascinating one, writes JOHN SAKER.

"THERE ARE 100 DIFFERENT faces of chardonnay," noted Cameron Douglas going into this tasting. Over the two days that followed, the Cuisine panel went nose to nose with quite a few of them. As you'd expect from a variety with such a stylistically diverse wardrobe, there was plenty of discussion during the tasting. Among the recurring themes were the use of oak, the presence of sulphides (a naturally occurring character we often describe as a "flinty" or "oyster shell" note) and levels of fruit ripeness. As always, the collective goal was to seek out wines with balance and finesse. At the end of the tasting, unsurprisingly, a broad range of styles were represented in our top wines. "We're seeing a lot of experimentation," said panel chair John Belsham. "That leads to diversity which is positive, but not always to consistency of quality." Cameron Douglas revelled in the broad spectrum of styles. "People are pushing the boundaries in terms of oak and sulphides," he said. "And we were challenged in that regard. Ultimately, the wines that came out on top were seamless and balanced." Andrew Parkinson felt the overall quality had improved: "We may be in a stage of transition, but we're not seeing the number of poor examples we have in the past." From a field of 167 chardonnays, 43 received four stars or more and eight of these were awarded the maximum five stars.















Tasting Panel

For this chardonnay tasting, John Belsham, an international wine judge and owner of Foxes Island Wines in Marlborough, was joined by Cameron Douglas, New Zealand's only Master Sommelier and senior wine-show judge, and Andrew Parkinson, national on-premise and fine wine manager for Negociants New Zealand. Associate judge (non-scoring) was Cuisine's wine writer John Saker.



Best Buys

Those wines offering an outstanding mix of quality and price are awarded Best Buy status. Price points differ, depending on the varietal, but if you see the Best Buy sticker you can rest assured you're getting a great wine at an excellent price. Look out for the sticker on wine bottles at all good wine retailers

'ASTING PANEL: JASON CREAGHAN

Tasting results

★★★★ outstanding	8
**** excellent	10
★★★★ very good	25
**★ good	40
No award	84
TOTAL	167



1. Domaine Rewa Chardonnay 2013 (Central Otago) ***** \$35

2. Spy Valley Chardonnay 2013 (Marlborough)



3. Matua Lands & Legends Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ \$30

4. Vidal Legacy Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay)

********60**

5. Villa Maria Cellar Selection Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014 ***** \$18



6. Villa Maria Single Vineyard Keltern Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay)★★★★ \$35

7. Mills Reef Reserve Chardonnay Hawke's Bay 2014 **** \$24.95



8. Lawson's Dry Hills Chardonnay 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★★ \$20



9. Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Chardonnay 2013 (Hawke's Bay) **** \$35

10. Palliser Estate Martinborough Chardonnay 2014 ★★★★ \$39

Top NZ Chardonnay





Domaine Rewa Chardonnay 2013 (Central Otago)

***** 1-5 \$35

This fabulous example of a cool climate chardonnay is all about contained precision. The scents it offers up are subtle, yet from the first sip you know you're in for a rare treat. Creamy peach and citrus notes, seasoned with a touch of flint and savoury spice, are served up bone dry. It is mouthfilling, concentrated and vibrant. "Perfect balance – nothing sticks out," noted Andrew Parkinson. It is the kind of modern, lean chardonnay that pairs off so well with oysters and other shellfish dishes.

AN IDEAL PARTNER TO OYSTERS AND OTHER SHELLFISH DISHES



For John Saker's video review of our top chardonnay, visit cuisinewine.co.nz

Euro paean

Domaine Rewa, as its name suggests, is a New Zealand winery with a leaning towards the old world. Its proprietors are Philippa Shepherd and her French husband, potter Yannick Fourbet. For the past 11 years, Shepherd has been based in London where she currently works for Deutsche Bank. She grew up on an Otago farm, and at the urging of her family back in New Zealand, bought a small (5.5ha) established vineyard in the Cromwell Basin in 2009. Shepherd and Fourbet wanted a name that straddled both their lands and cultures; "Rewa" was chosen as it was the given name of Shepherd's grandmother. The vines are a mix of pinot noir, pinot gris, riesling and chardonnay and were planted in 1997 on an elevated site near Pisa Moorings along the Wanaka Rd. The vineyard is farmed biodynamically by viticulturists Grant Rolston and Gary Ford and 2013 was Domaine Rewa's third vintage. Production is small – only 3000 bottles of the 2013 chardonnay were made – but a push is being made this year to increase the label's presence in fine wine stores and restaurants around the country. Winemaker Pete Bartle regards the vineyard's chardonnay fruit as among the best he has seen from the region. Shepherd's instructions to him were simple: "Please make the chardonnay in a subtle, old world style." That it has won over Fourbet – a diehard lover of his own country's wines and previously something of a Kiwi wine sceptic - suggests the brief was answered.

CHARDONNAY











Popular vote

The world loves chardonnay. While 20 years ago it was nowhere to be found on the list of the world's top 10 most planted grape varieties, today it is sitting comfortably at number five and poised to go higher. Here in New Zealand, we're not growing as much chardonnay as we were 10 years ago, but we are doing a much better job of it, up and down the country. One of the remarkable things about this grape is its ability to pull out show-stopping appearances from a broad range of terroirs. Indeed, it's the only grape to have more than a token presence in all of New Zealand's wine regions. In each of these places, locals will quietly express the opinion that their chardonnays are the best in the country. Winemakers revel in the opportunity chardonnay gives them to put their own thumbprint on the wine, which has led to the rich stylistic divergence we're now seeing. And you'll hear plenty of discussion from chardonnay drinkers about the style they prefer, all perfectly friendly. De gustibus non est disputandum - in matters of taste, there can be no disputes.



2. Spy Valley Chardonnay 2013 (Marlborough)

*****I-4\$25

Grown using six clones of chardonnay, this wine triggered a lot of panel discussion. A flinty, smoky layer hangs over a busy rush of fresh citrus zest and juicy acidity – "it's like squeezed lime on schist", said John Saker. The finish is long, with a savoury edge. Another wine that calls out to be paired with seafood – try serving it alongside scampi.

3. Matua Lands & Legends Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) *****I-6\$30

The nose of this wine is impressive: intense saline and flinty scents, laced with a dash of spice – John Belsham thought white pepper. In the mouth, it is equally intense, with lemon and grapefruit pith characters and an attractive fleshy texture. And the fruit-oak balance is exemplary. A Moroccan lamb tagine would be a perfect match.

4. Vidal Legacy Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay)

*****1-5\$60

Vidal winemaker Hugh Crichton's approach and devotion to chardonnay has won him many accolades. This is a classic Legacy: a weighty, concentrated wine with citrus, biscuit and sweet herb notes wrapped in smoky intrigue. A chardonnay that has both presence and gravitas.

5. Villa Maria Cellar Selection Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014 ***** 1-3\$18



Once again, you have to hand it to the Villa Maria Cellar Selection label. This chardonnay delivers a lot of complexity for the price. A silvery, flinty spine subtly powers the wine, dispensing citrus and meal notes across the palate. Great finesse, great length, great with gurnard and a dash of lemon.

6. Villa Maria Single Vineyard **Keltern Chardonnay 2014** (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 1-5 \$35

Keltern is one of the country's few chardonnay vineyards that is a strong brand in its own right, thanks to wines like this. It's a thoroughbred – a seamless flow of citrus and creamed corn flavours enlivened by flinty complexity. "Full of texture, flavour and energy," noted Cameron Douglas.

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7. Mills Reef Reserve Chardonnay Hawke's Bay 2014 **** | -3 \$24.95



This wine leans more toward the "trad" camp. Stonefruit, melon and grain flavours emerge, with a light dusting of oak. It is a fresh, lively and direct style with a touch of sweetness. The perfect wine to pull out for Friday night drinks with Asian-style finger food.

8. Lawson's Dry Hills Chardonnay 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★★ 1-4 \$20



Beguiling scents – apple strudel, citrus and a hint of caramel – lead the way. In the mouth it is equally rewarding, especially in regard to its enveloping, graceful texture. "Pristine definition", noted John Belsham. A great match for an old-fashioned chicken pie.



9. Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Chardonnay 2013 (Hawke's Bay) *****!-4\$35

Trinity Hill winemaker Warren Gibson nailed it with this 2013 rendition. It has

a settled, harmonious quality. Around a core of powerful, still citrusy fruit is an elegant robe of toast and flint, while the texture is gentle and the finish long and fine. A wine that keeps giving more with every sip.

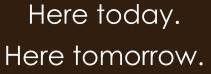
10. Palliser Estate Martinborough Chardonnay 2014

*****1-5\$39

This leading Martinborough label's chardonnays have been impressive of late, and this new edition maintains the momentum. The only Martinborough chardonnay to make it into the Top 10, it's a bold, powerful style with richly creamy peach characters balanced by savoury spice. It's a polished, classy wine that would match perfectly with roast chicken.

Brancott Estate Letter Series O Marlborough Chardonnay 2013 **** 1-4 \$33.20

This is the first Marlborough Letter Series Chardonnay to be released by Brancott Estate. Ripe and eager to please, after a shy overture this wine opens up in the mouth with an intense offering of sweet peach and meal flavours. Its texture is a delight – soft and powdery – and the balance is perfect. It would be a great choice to serve alongside a mildly spiced chicken rendang.





LuigiBormioli

For something so beautiful, so very Italian, Strauss is also surprisingly tough, with SON.hyx, the lead-free, high-tech, blown crystal glass. Not only is this glass durable but it's enduring as well - available since 1984 and still going strong. All this without breaking the bank either.

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CHARDONNAY











Craggy Range Chardonnay Gimblett Gravels Vineyard Hawke's Bay 2014

*****1-4\$31.95

Cameron Douglas enjoyed the "mix of pristine fruit, flinty elegance and smart, measured oak". The fruit, which has density and an attractive greengage plum note, holds its line beautifully and finishes long. This is a restrained rendition that would work well with a salsa verde tossed pasta.

Kim Crawford Small Parcels Wild Grace Chardonnay 2013 (Hawke's Bay)

****1-3\$33

The fruit from two Bay vineyards (Corner 50 and Strathallan) finds its way into this accomplished wine. Flinty minerality, toast, citrus and floral notes are in the vanguard, cutting a long fine swathe across the palate. A charming style that would go well alongside a salmon steak.

Muddy Water Chardonnay 2014 (Waipara)

****1-4\$40

Grown on a chalky Waipara hillside, this wine charmed the panel with its opulent nose and extroverted palate. The concentrated, ripe stonefruit (peach, apricot) flavours are underlined by great acidity. The perfect match for a baked Mediterranean vegetable (eggplant, capsicum) dish.

Saint Clair Pioneer Block 11 Cell Block Chardonnay 2013 (Marlborough)

*****1-3\$32.90

The Cell Block name on this wine is in reference to the grower, a former NZ Police detective. The wine itself is a lovely, focused little number with plenty happening – creamy sweet meal notes, tight ripe citrus and a hint of steel. The concentrated fruit goes the distance and resolves well. Serve it with a lunch of salt and pepper squid and green salad.

Selaks Founders Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2013

*****1-3\$25

This wine provoked a lot of debate. It is a powerful, raw style with an intriguing flavour profile. Saline, earthy, citrus and mineral notes crowd the palate, loud and boisterous, corseted by a firm texture. A confronting chardonnay that would meet its match with a rabbit terrine.

Vidal Legacy Chardonnay 2010 (Hawke's Bay)

*****I-2\$60

One of three Vidal Legacys to be awarded four stars or more, this wine carries its years well. "She's a big old girl, but she's doing well," noted Cameron Douglas. Depth, toast and sweetness are suspended in a soft textural hammock. Savour the joys of aged chardonnay.

Villa Maria Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014

******I-5\$32

The nose of this wine has everything you want from a modern chardonnay: wisps of flinty smokiness, citrus flowers, toast and butter. In the mouth, the citrus grows and frolics, seasoned by a hint of Polish sausage-like spice, and the texture is fleshy. Another winner from the Villa Maria stable.



"I feel we've championed wines where the hard work has been in the vineyard, rather than in the winery, regardless of style. You can't paper over inferior fruit with stylistic artifice. Consumers know that too."

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Ashwood Estate Gisborne Chardonnay 2013 ★★★★ \$29

Babich Family Estates Headwaters Organic Chardonnay 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★ \$27

Cable Bay Awatere Valley Chardonnay 2014 ★★★★ \$25

Church Road Grand Reserve Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2013 *** \$44.35

Church Road Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014 **** \$19.60



Clearview Estate Beachhead Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) **** \$27

Clearview Estate Reserve Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) **** \$39

Esk Valley Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ \$20





Fromm La Strada Chardonnay (Marlborough) 2013 ★★★ \$37

Hunter's Marlborough Chardonnay 2014 ★★★ \$21



Martinborough Vineyard Chardonnay 2013 ★★★★ \$40

Mission Estate Winery Reserve Chardonnay 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★ \$25

Mount Riley Seventeen Valley Chardonnay 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★ \$30

Ngatarawa Proprietors Reserve Chardonnay 2013 (Hawke's Bay) **** \$34

Osawa Prestige Collection Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2013 *** \$45

Rod McDonald Wines Te Awanga Estate Hawke's Bay Chardonnay 2014 ★★★★ \$25

Saint Clair Pioneer Block 10 Twin Hills Chardonnay 2013 (Marlborough) ★★★ \$32.90

Soho Carter Chardonnay 2014 (Waiheke Island) ★★★ \$37

Wairau River Chardonnay 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★★ \$20



Whitehaven Marlborough Chardonnay 2013 ★★★★ \$24.90

W5 Chardonnay Marlborough 2014 ★★★★ \$25

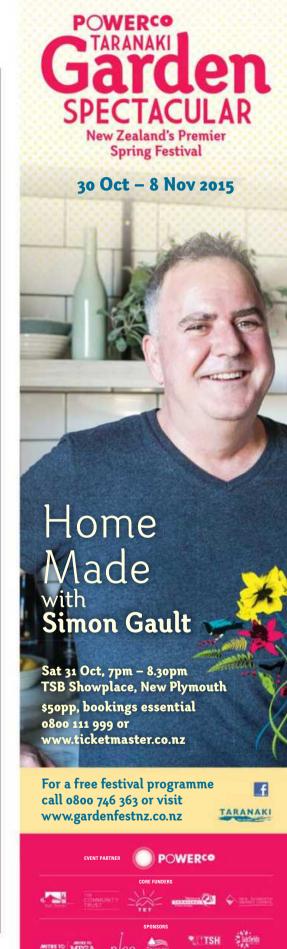
Vidal Legacy Chardonnay 2011 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★ \$60

Villa Maria Cellar Selection Marlborough Chardonnay 2014 ★★★ \$18



Villa Maria Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2013 (Auckland) ★★★★ \$35

Villa Maria Single Vineyard Ihumatao Chardonnay 2014 (Auckland) ★★★★ \$35



* * * ISISHON NZCT DAILYNEWS **

bright whites

New Zealand is increasingly producing some top specialty white wines, writes **JOHN SAKER**.

THE CATEGORY WE CURRENTLY call "specialty whites" has traditionally comprised a small circle of entries. This year it was much larger than usual, with a total of 50 wines at the tasting. There are several reasons for this, the first being we decided to bring viognier into the fold for 2015. While the country has had some success with viognier over the past decade, it remains a very small player, accounting for just 0.4 per cent of New Zealand's total vineyard area. The other main contributor to the tasting's expansion has been the relatively rapid rise of a couple of other lesser-known white varieties: gruner veltliner and albarino. The former has found a home in several wineries over the past few years, and nine of these labels were represented at this tasting. The latter has also established a small but enthusiastic presence, especially in Gisborne (see page 124). "It's great to see this broadening of the varieties grown in New Zealand," said panel chair John Belsham. "At this early stage, a number of them look very promising."

Tasting results

- 4
1
2
11
36
50

Tasting Panel

The NZ chardonnay tasting panel also reviewed the NZ specialty whites.

Top NZ Specialty White





Forrest Chenin Blanc 2013 (Marlborough)

****1-6\$28

Marlborough's Forrest wines has become a pioneer in the specialty white wine sector and the great white grape of the Loire Valley has found itself a loving home here. This is a fascinating medium-dry, lively wine – goat's curd, nettle and grapefruit characters cling to a round spine of acid and leave a lasting impression. It will also age gracefully.

> SERVE IT ALONGSIDE A PORK CHOP WITH APPLE SAUCE

Forrest trump

As we reported several months ago in Cuisine, Forrest winemaker Beth Forrest recently returned to the family firm with a mission: to make great chenin blanc. The quality of the wine that took top honours in this tasting would suggest she's already across it. "We regard the 2013 version as the best chenin blanc Forrest has made since 2001," says Beth, pinning the credit for the wine's success on a great vintage and some venerable old vines. "The 2013 season was not only hot, it gave us a variety of intense flavours. And we're lucky, because chenin blanc was part of the earliest plantings in our home block. Those vines are coming up to 30 years old." Beth fell for chenin blanc when she worked a vintage for a Loire Valley-based French wine consultant in 2010. "From that experience, I learned the importance of texture-building through lees contact. The style we're now making here is an off-dry wine that I think is akin to an everyday-drinking Vouvray (a Loire Valley chenin blanc appellation)." Forrest has recently planted more chenin blanc vines in the Brancott Valley. Says Beth, "They should give us stunning aromatics."

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NZ SPECIALTY WHITES



Jules Taylor Wines Marlborough Gruner Veltliner 2014 *** * \$22

Gladstone Vineyard Viognier 2014 (Wairarapa) ********\$25



For details of Cuisine wine tastings in stores throughout NZ, visit cuisinewine.co.nz

Tasting notes

Outstanding quality

Excellent quality

**** Very good quality (listings only)

★★★ Good quality (website listings only)



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TASTING METHOD All wines are tasted blind. If, after discussion, the tasters do not agree on a star rating, the wine will receive the rating given by the majority but dissenting comments will be included in the wine notes. The scores of winemaker judges cannot exceed those of other judges.

AVAILABILITY All wines entered in *Cuisine* tastings must be readily available at the time of publication. However, high demand and a six-week lead time between tastings and publication can affect availability. If you cannot find the wines, contact the winery or distributor direct.

PRICES Suppliers are asked to provide a retail price range for all wines entered in tastings. Prices do vary between vineyard and low-to-high volume outlets and cannot, therefore, be guaranteed. All prices are

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flight path

A new Italian influence is having an impact at Matakana's Heron's Flight, writes **JOHN SAKER**.

t was a meeting of vino and canto. In 2011, New Zealand soprano Anna Leese was in Tuscany to give a concert at the Petrolo winery.

On arrival, she caught the eye of winemaker Stefano Guidi, who invited her to board his motorbike and head off to a nearby cafe for a drink. She quickly discovered that Guidi loved music as much as she loved wine. Later, finishing her concert with a Mascagni aria and holding a small bouquet, she approached Guidi and handed him the flowers.

A few years on, a second meeting – this time between vino and vino – enabled Guidi to forge another Kiwi bond. He and Leese were touring New Zealand with a view to settling here, and were paying a visit to the Heron's Flight winery in Matakana. Guidi was intrigued – Heron's Flight has championed Italian red varieties sangiovese and dolcetto since the 1990s and is also committed to organic farming, which Guidi strongly believes in. He struck up a conversation with Heron's Flight co-owner and vigneron David Hoskins.

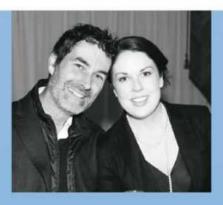
"We got on extremely well," recalls Hoskins. "It was when he mentioned he'd been offered a job in Marlborough that I said, 'It would be a nice fit if you could work for us'." Several months later, it was a done deal. Guidi took over the winemaking role at Heron's Flight last November and has had an immediate effect, making all the 2015 wines. David Hoskins and his wife Mary, who together established the winery couldn't be happier.

"We've been doing this for more than 25 years," says Hoskins. "We could have continued along the same path, maybe grown. But we don't want to be bigger, just better. Stefano is creative and passionate. [Italians] have a completely different way of looking at wine, so he's making changes. We love the ideas he brings to the table."

One of those changes is the making of an amphora wine. Guidi arranged the importation of a 500-litre amphora from Italy and has used it to ferment sangiovese picked in the 2015 vintage in a natural way, similar to the methods employed in ancient times. The making of amphora wine is a small but burgeoning trend around the world, and Heron's Flight's rendition will be the first made in New Zealand.

Guidi has also created a drying rack to make another Italian style that dates back to the Roman Empire – the sweet wine known as passito or "straw wine".

Along with these innovations



though, Guidi is not blind to commercial realities. He has looked hard at the New Zealand market and has suggested to Hoskins that Heron's Flight produce some approachable, early release wines to sell at smart prices. "As a way of introducing people to our Italian varieties, it makes sense," says Hoskins. "Get a wine out there and get people talking."

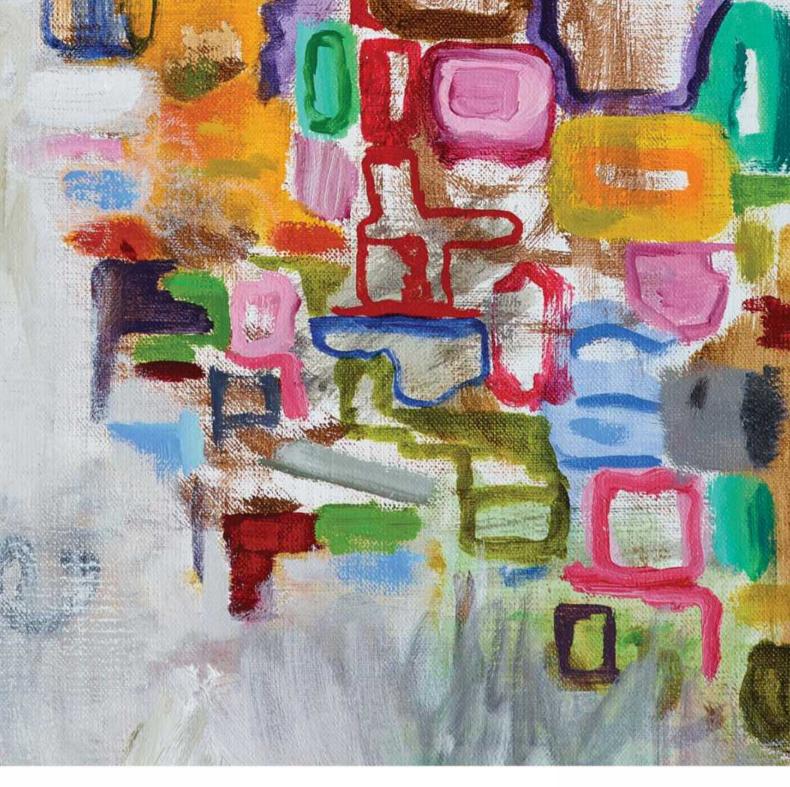
For Guidi, the work and challenges at Heron's Flight are all-absorbing.

"It's different from Italian wine," he says. "That's the beauty of wine... how a grape variety expresses itself in a different country. Personally, I am finding the Italian varieties are more characterful over here than many of the French varieties. David has done a great job. There is a lot of potential in this area... I am so excited to be here."

Both Guidi and Leese, who were married in Dunedin earlier in the year, have settled into their new lives in the north. They've bought a house in Warkworth and Leese now teaches music at a local high school, while continuing to give concerts up and down the country. The pair enjoy working together in the garden at their home and say the flowers they've planted are thriving. *



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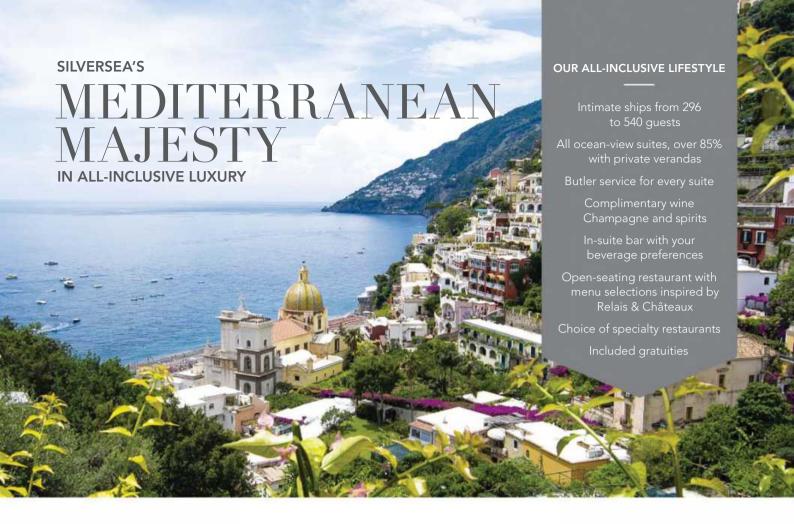








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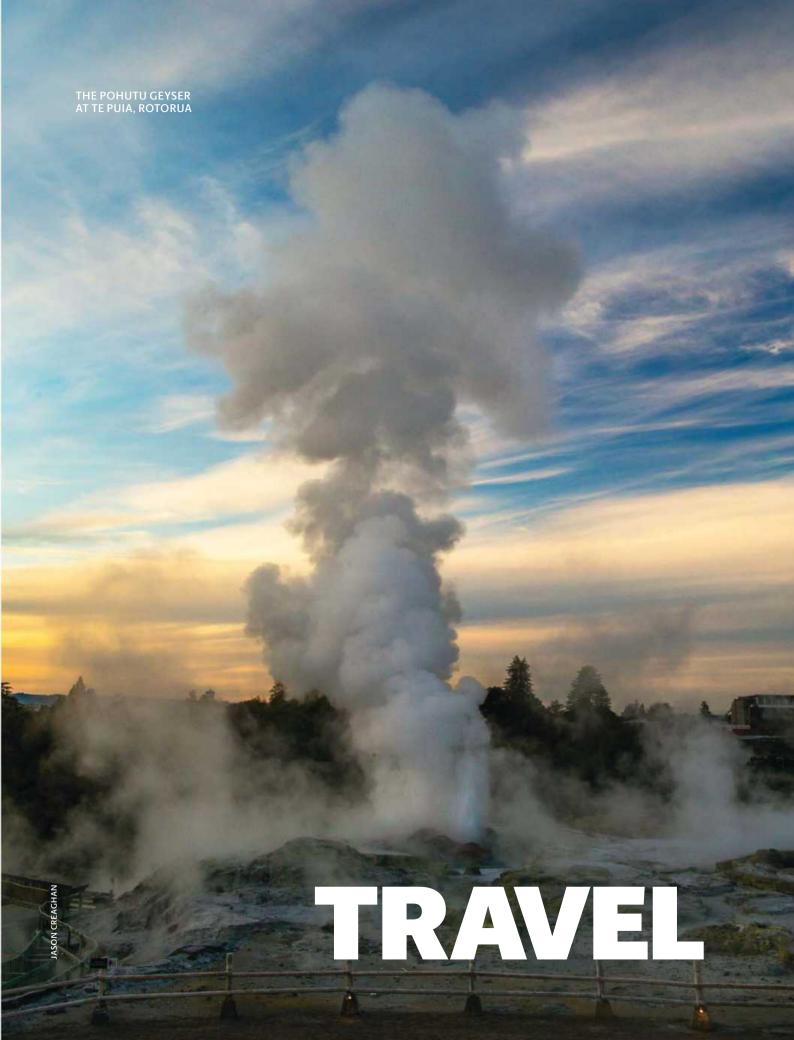
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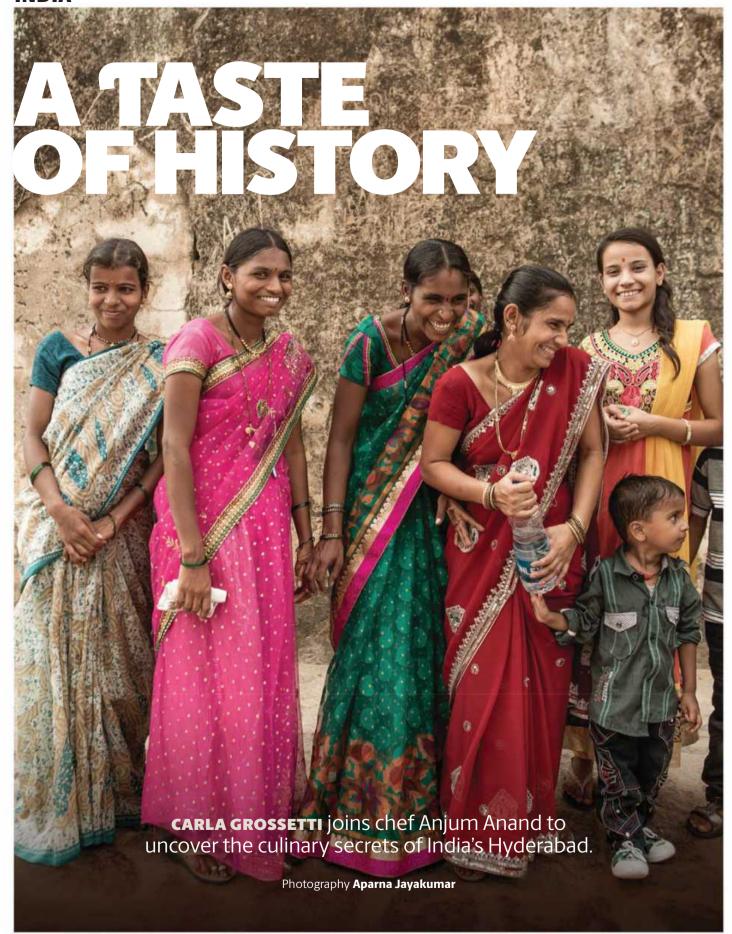
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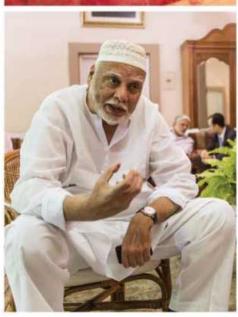


INDIA



FROM TOP Anjum Anand examines produce near Charminar monument; brightly hued spices for sale in Laad Bazaar; local culinary expert Mehboob Alam Khan OPPOSITE, FROM TOP
The area around Charminar monument is always busy with traffic and street hawkers; Anjum (at right) speaks with women at Laad Bazaar





he warren of streets around Laad Bazaar in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad are thronged with men and women hawking everything from copper pots to strings of pearls, dried figs and dates, glittering plastic bangles and large vials of pungent pickles. All around are mobile vendors and makeshift stalls piled high with pakoras, papaya, limes, red onions, ginger, coriander, turmeric and coils of golden vermicelli. The harsh discordant sound of beeping horns is the city's soundtrack and the stallholders must put an extra edge into their shouts in order to lift their voices above the whirrs and clunks of the traffic around the iconic 16th-century Charminar monument.

When British-born chef, TV personality and author Anjum Anand slices through the dusty streets of the old city in the golden light of the afternoon, she causes a commotion as she stops near a man barbecuing skewers of mutton. A crowd gathers around Anand as she selects a sampler, marvelling at the beguiling spice mix of pepper, salt and cumin, along with the meltingly tender meat.

"I've always remembered mutton from my childhood visits to India, but what strikes me about Hyderabad is how much attention they pay to tenderising the meat," says Anand. She was born in London, spent time in Geneva, Paris and Madrid growing up, and inherited a love of Indian food from her Punjabi-immigrant parents. "It is only through actually being here that you realise how important meat is to the people of Hyderabad. The mutton is tenderised in green papaya, and it just falls apart so beautifully."

Historically known as a pearl- and diamond-trading centre, modern-day Hyderabad is on the map for being home to more than 1000 global conglomerates, including Google and Facebook.

Anand is visiting the capital of the southern Indian state of Telangana to gather inspiration for The Spice Tailor, her sauce and chutney range. With the help of a local guide, Anand says she aims "to get to the heart of Hyderabad through its cuisine".

While the city has plenty of attractions and artistic treasures, it's the Hyderabadi biryani that most intrigues Anand, and she's thrilled to have been invited into the home of local culinary expert Mehboob Alam Khan to learn all about it.

Khan has dedicated decades to perfecting the city's signature dish and adheres to a recipe that he says dates back hundreds of years, to the kitchens of the Hyderabadi royalty. Like the skyline shaped by minarets and dome-shaped tombs, the biryani is a legacy of the Nizams who ruled Hyderabad for two centuries until 1947.

"I was about 15 when I made my first biryani and I learned this recipe from my mother. It follows the traditional method of cooking in a deg [a large pot-bellied copper pot] over a charcoal fire and sealing the lid with a circle of dough to keep the steam inside," says Khan, who is in his late 60s. "Although my family migrated from the North West Frontier Province [modern-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, near Pakistan], I am the fourth generation to be in Hyderabad.

I feel like this is where I belong."

As Khan talks Anand through the secrets of making a good biryani – "a true Hyderabadi biryani is made the kacchi [raw] way of cooking rice with raw mutton" – his words ring out like incantations, his way of speaking both direct and precise. When the giant deg arrives, Khan breaks the dough seal and Anand's eyes light up.

The fluffy white rice is dotted with rich, tender hunks of mutton, which is







"If you're interested in Indian food, the cuisine of Hyderabad is well worth understanding. It's a cuisine that stands out because it's so refined, so pure. It is food that is not going to evolve because people don't want it to evolve – this is food that was fit for royalty" – Anjum Anand





then piled onto platters and served alongside raita and mirchi ka salan (chilli and peanut curry). It's a banquet fit for a Nazim, and 50 or so guests gather around the table that is also laden with dhal fry, creamy chicken with spices, mung bean masala, eggplants in peanut sauce, stuffed roasted chickens, a whole barbecued goat, a meat and lentil stew and chicken curry. To follow, there's stewed apricot dessert, bread pudding and tea.

Despite not growing up in India, Anand is reverential about her Indian heritage and it's a pride she shares with Khan, who is deeply committed to preserving the country's ancient culinary traditions.

"If you're interested in Indian food, the cuisine of Hyderabad is well worth understanding," says Anand. "It's a cuisine that stands out above a lot of the others because it's so refined, so pure. It is food that is not going to evolve because the people don't want it to evolve – this is food that was fit for royalty and they are justifiably proud of that. The flavour profiles present in Hyderabadi cuisine are so different. The Mughals didn't like heat and spices and it's because the food has such a strong Mughal history that it

is so glaringly different from all other Indian cuisine. It gives me so much joy to learn about it."

The next day, the air is humid and heavy as Anand again ventures into the city, where she pinballs from chai wallahs to stalls selling hand-churned ice cream. She stops to talk with a sari-clad streetside vendor barbecuing corn, and calls into a kebab shop serving pathar ka gosht (meat cooked on a hot stone). Anand's tastebud-led tour also takes us to the cupboard-sized Munshi Naan, which has queues snaking around the block.

It's here that Anand is invited to crouch alongside the roti wallah on a bare cement floor that is quivering in a film of heat. Anand watches as the young man expertly slaps the roti against the wall of a cement oven, which is black from years of cooking smoke. As Bollywood music blares in the background, the roti wallah cackles and sings, before leaning forward and plucking out a square of bread for Anand to try. "It's soft on the inside and crisp on the outside but it's not too dense or doughy. It's unlike any naan I've eaten," she says.

When Anand arrived in Hyderabad, she had no firsthand knowledge of the city. But the intimate experiences of sharing street food with locals and a feast with the city's culinary king have left a lasting impression.

"Food is so much more interesting when you imagine its history. When Hyderabadi people talk about their favourite food, it is as if they are talking about a family member. The level of care and attention is enchanting. It's like stepping through the centuries," she says.

* Carla Grossetti travelled as a guest of The Spice Tailor

FROM TOP A chai wallah; mutton skewers are a favourite Hyderabadi dish; young boys relax on a park bench

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HYDERABAD BIRYANI

vegetable oil for frying

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 45 minutes (plus 2-24 hours marinating time) Cooking 1 hour 30 minutes

The Hyderabad biryani differs from others I've tried. It is delicate and fragrant; subtle but flavourful. The art is in achieving a harmonious flavour and cooking the meat and rice together to perfection. The green papaya tenderises the meat, but if you can't find it you can leave it out.

2 onions, thinly sliced 500g lamb pieces (lean pieces of leg are ideal, with the bone in if possible) 4 large cloves garlic, crushed to a paste 10g ginger, peeled, crushed to a paste ½ tablespoon green papaya paste (optional, made by peeling a green papaya then grating the flesh) 1½ teaspoons salt 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper 1 heaped teaspoon garam masala ½ teaspoon red chilli powder or to taste 3/4 teaspoon black cumin seeds, lightly pounded 21/2 tablespoons lemon juice, plus 2 teaspoons extra 110g plain yoghurt 6 cloves 2 x 2-inch cinnamon quills 12 green cardamom pods handful of chopped coriander leaves and stems, plus extra to serve handful of chopped mint leaves, plus extra to serve 200g chapati flour or strong bread flour 500g good-quality basmati rice large pinch saffron strands 4 tablespoons milk green chillies to serve

Heat 5cm of oil in a saucepan, then gently fry the onions for 10-15 minutes or until just brown and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside to drain and cool on paper towels. Reserve the oil.

Wash the lamb well, then pat dry with paper towels and prick all over with the point of a knife. Place the lamb in a bowl. Add the garlic, ginger, papaya paste, salt, pepper, garam masala, chilli, black cumin, 2½ tablespoons lemon juice and the yoghurt. Then add 3 tablespoons of the onion oil and two-thirds of the onions, crushed in your hands. Finally, add 3 cloves, 1 cinnamon quill, 6 cardamom pods and half the coriander and mint. Mix well with your hands to coat the lamb in the yoghurt and flavourings. Cover and marinate in the fridge for at least a few hours, or overnight if you have time.

When you are ready to cook, put the meat in a heavybottomed casserole dish or saucepan with a lid and allow the meat to come to room temperature.

Put the flour in a bowl and add around 150ml water, mixing to form a firm dough. Roll into a sausage as long as the diameter of the casserole or saucepan. Set aside.



Wash the rice well in several changes of water, then put in a bowl, cover with water and soak for 18-20 minutes.

Meanwhile, fill a large saucepan with water. Add the remaining 3 cloves, cinnamon, 6 cardamom pods, mint, coriander and 2 teaspoons lemon juice. Season with salt.

Fry the saffron in a dry saucepan over medium heat until crisp, then pour in the milk. Bring to a simmer and cook for 1-2 minutes, then remove from the heat.

Drain the rice, then add to the saucepan of water and spices. Bring to the boil, then boil for exactly 3 minutes. Drain, reserving the cooking water. Spoon the par-cooked rice over the lamb.

Add 100ml of the reserved hot rice cooking water to the milk and saffron, along with 4 tablespoons of the reserved onion oil. Pour this mixture evenly over the lamb and rice, then scatter with the remaining onions. Cover the dish with the lid, then use the dough to create an extra seal around the lid, pressing it onto the dish.

Place the dish on the stovetop over medium-high heat for 7 minutes, then reduce the heat to the lowest setting and cook for 50 minutes. Remove from the heat and stand for 10 minutes. Pull the dough off the dish and tear into pieces, then mix through the biryani. Serve topped with mint, coriander and chillies. **ANJUM ANAND**

Where to Eat

Nimrah Cafe & Bakery

This is the place to try traditional sweet-salty osmania biscuits with a cup of chai. Opposite Charminar, Khilwat, Hyderabad

Hyderabad House

A popular choice for traditional dishes such as korma, mutton lukhmi and haleem. facebook.com/ hydhouse

Paradise Food Court

A great spot to try haleem (a meat and lentil stew laced with herbs). paradisefoodcourt.com **Bade Miyan Kababs** This is the go-to place for pathar ka gosht - mutton cooked on a pre-heated stone. **Behind the Rama Dasu** statue, Upper Tank **Bund Rd, Hyderabad Munshi Naan** Where to find arguably the city's best naan – the most popular is the char koni naan. Dabeer Pura Cross Rd, Purani Haveli, Old City, Hyderabad The Jade Room, Taj Falaknuma Palace Hotel This beautiful historic hotel serves fabulous high teas. tajhotels.com

Ravalaseema Ruchulu

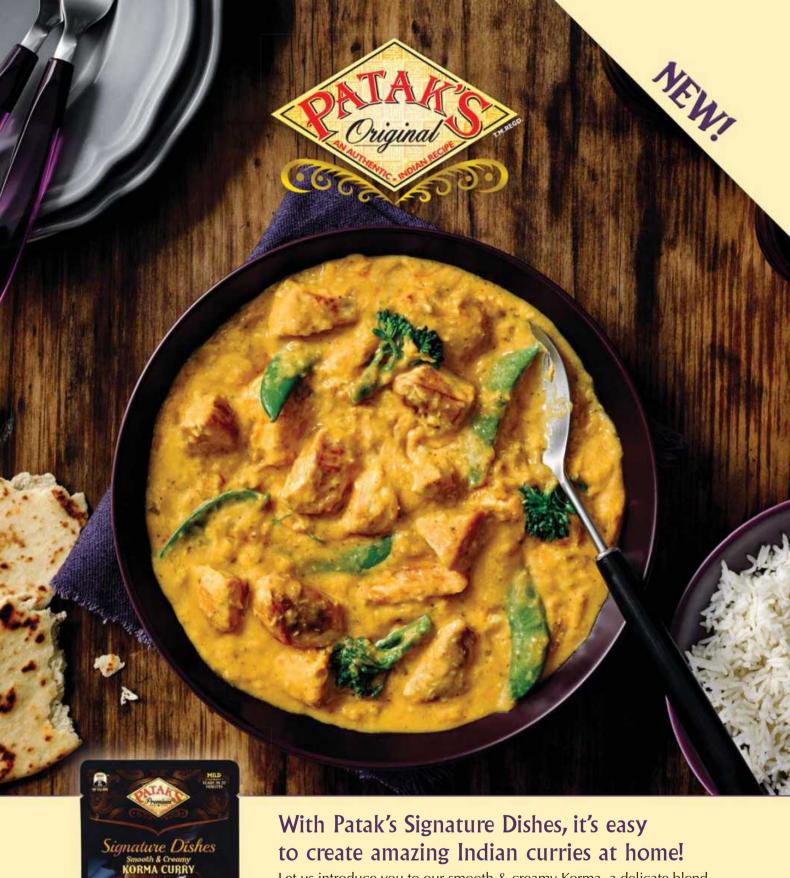
A chain that serves up southern Indian dishes such as idli (savoury cakes) and dosa (crepes). rayalaseemaruchulu.com **Chutneys Menu** An array of southern Indian, northern Indian and tandoor menus are available here. Follow the locals and order a thali (a selection of dishes). Shilpa Arcade, Road 3, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad **Famous Ice Cream** Appropriately named, this place's hand-churned ice creams are indeed

famous. Don't miss the mango. Mozamjahi Market, Nizam Shahi Rd (opposite the Traffic Police Station), Old City, Hyderabad

Where to Stay

Park Hyatt A stylish, sleek modern hotel that also offers bespoke tours for visitors. hyderabad.park.hyatt.com
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JANICE KIRKWOOD discovers the fascinating flavours of China on a culinary tour with Fuchsia Dunlop.

caught the Chinese food bug in Australia. In Melbourne's Hutong Dumpling Bar, Dainty Sichuan and Shandong Mama, I discovered flavours I'd never experienced before, and realised there was so much more to Chinese food than chicken and corn soup and beef hor fun. I developed a particular liking for the spice of Sichuan cuisine and soon, those trips across the Tasman weren't enough. I began looking for recipe books so that I could make Sichuan food at home and the name Fuchsia Dunlop kept popping up.

Dunlop is a UK-born food writer. restaurant consultant and chef. Her own obsession with China began while she was working in sub-editing at the BBC – she started taking evening classes in Mandarin, then won a scholarship to study in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, for a year. Since then, she's become an authority on the food of China and has published a number of books, including Shark's Fin & Sichuan *Pepper* – a memoir of her time spent in China – and three excellent cookbooks, which helped me to begin to recreate the magical flavours I was hooked on. When I learnt that Dunlop leads regular gastronomic tours to China with WildChina. I knew I had to go. What better person to help further my education?

Together with my partner Rory, I signed up to join Fuchsia and nine new friends to travel from Beijing to Xi'an, Chengdu, Hangzhou and Shanghai. We were told that we would sample more than 300 dishes over 12 days and despite my excitement, I must admit to some pre-tour nerves. Firstly, I had never been on an organised tour before and wasn't sure what it would be like travelling with strangers. And secondly, I wasn't sure how on



earth I was going to eat that much.

Our first meal in Beijing together sets the tone for the rest of the visit, as we are ushered into a private room with a large round table and a lazy Susan. The main restaurant looks fun, but for 11 of us to be able to hear Dunlop describe the dishes' origins, ingredients and cooking methods, we need to be segregated from other diners. And so the dining room becomes our classroom.

A similar pattern unfolds for subsequent banquets. Dunlop orders an array of hot and cold appetisers and mains; we average 20 dishes a meal. In each place, she takes into account local ingredients, textures and cooking styles when placing our order, and endeavours to ensure we will not have the same dish twice.

We spend the next three days in Beijing sampling the food from Shandong province, including the famous Peking duck and what we in the West call Mongolian hotpot, but is locally known as scalded mutton hotpot. We attend our first market, with Dunlop escorting us around the

stalls and explaining what different vegetables are. Most stallholders are taken aback when she speaks to them in fluent Mandarin – and none more so than the one she scolds for being rude after she overhears him talking about the size of our Western bottoms.

In Beijing I notice that there has been no rice at our banquets – Dunlop explains that as we are in wheat country, our carbs will come in the form of noodles and steamed mantou breads. The northern provinces of China typically eat more wheat-based foods, while southerners eat more rice.

At each meal, we encounter new ingredients. The range of Chinese greens far surpasses the bok choy and choi sum we know back home. We sample amaranth, perilla leaf, Sichuan pepper sprouts, chrysanthemum greens and fiddlehead ferns. Dragon whiskers sound exotic, but turn out to be pumpkin shoots. Lettuce stem has a crunch and freshness I come to love. A dish of the brilliantly named stir-fried monkey head mushrooms has us asking to see one – it's impressively large, white and shaggy. I am also surprised to see lightly blanched, crunchy potato appearing in a salad.

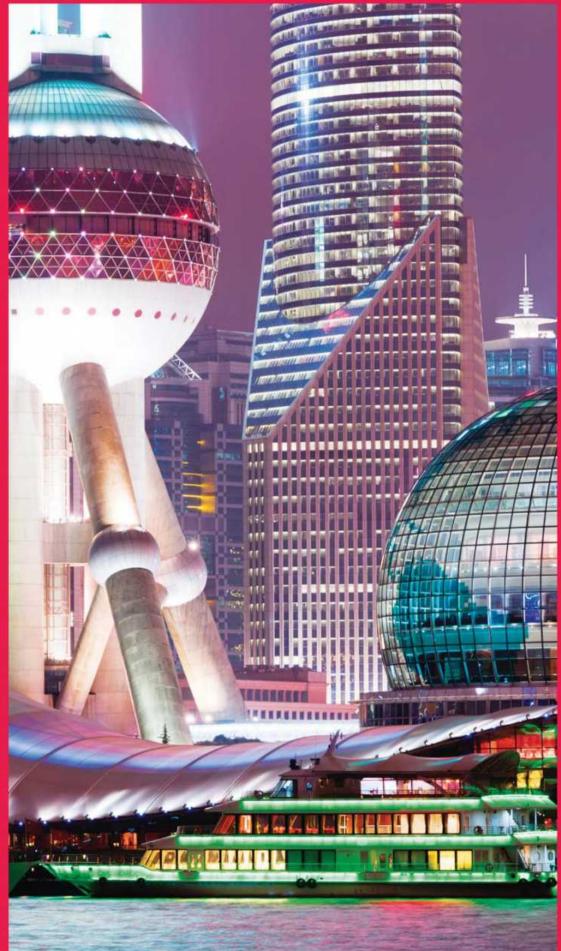
Other dishes also surprise. Camel's foot with chilli and long leeks is actually very tasty, though a bit chewy. I have decided I have to at least try everything that is put in front of me, though I almost come unstuck when faced with a plate of silk worms. But after a deep breath it's down the hatch they go, a bite through the crisp exterior revealing a soft, creamy filling.

Pressed and jellied meats are common starters throughout the tour and we see them in a variety of forms, from pressed donkey to pork belly, pork knuckle, jellied pig skin and pig's tongue. Eating in China is not just nose to tail, but





FOOD PHOTOGRAPHY, JANICE KIRKWOOD SHANGHAI, ISTOCKPHOTO/DEEJPILOT



Buildings on the waterfront in Shanghai **OPPOSITE, LEFT TO RIGHT** ROW 1 egg pancakes with chrysanthemum leaves; pork meatballs; noodles in sesame broth; pak choi hearts; pork-filled buns ROW 2 beef & radish in spicy sauce; beef & spring onions; pig's skin jelly; noodle soup with white pepper & pork balls; sweet potato noodles with pig intestines ROW 3 claypot with tofu & clams; pressed tofu skin with salt pork; steamed buns; peach tree sap with medicinal seeds; vegetarian crab meat ROW 4 smoked duck eggs with caviar; crab, potato & tomato soup; white cut chicken; buckwheat sprout salad; silver fish ROW 5 glutinous rice balls with crab; seaweed battered fish; steamed dumplings; boneless duck stuffed with glutinous rice; scrambled eggs & spring onions ROW 6 crab xiao long bao; lamb tripe with sesame sauce; bamboo pith fungus with matsutake mushroom in broth; tofu & fermented mung beans; boiled rabbit with spicy sauce ROW 7 spinach with tofu; crab meat with tofu; phoenix tails with sesame sauce; man & wife offal slices; pork

& shrimp wontons

Moving to Xi'an, where there is a large Muslim community, we have an excellent mutton stew which is poured over tiny pieces of torn flat bread. As the bread soaks up the liquid it almost becomes pasta-like.

It's in Xi'an that the full range of noodles available in China becomes clear. There are the usual suspects made from wheat, buckwheat and rice, but we also try fiddlehead fern, sweet potato, mung bean, lotus starch and sweet water noodles. And the shapes they come in are equally as varied.

The other ingredient that turns up in many forms is tofu. We see tofu skin pressed and cut into tagliatelle-like noodles and are enthralled by a dish of this tofu "pasta" with salt pork and greens. In another dish, dried tofu knots are added to a scalded mutton hotpot, along with frozen tofu. Freezing tofu changes its texture, meaning it's able to absorb more of the sauce it's served in. Tofu skins are often stir-fried with vegetables and while fermented tofu sounds unappealing, it turns out to be quite delicious.

As Dunlop lived in Chengdu while studying cookery, it's perhaps not surprising that Sichuan food is her first love. When we arrive in Chengdu, the hot, numbing scent of Sichuan pepper fills the air (and later our suitcases). Local menus now also showcase fresh green Sichuan pepper, which has a more intense flavour.

You can't go to Chengdu without having a Sichuan hotpot, which is

a fun way to share a meal. We dip ox penis, rooster testicles, goose intestines, tripe and rabbit kidneys into our boiling red hotpot and Dunlop tells us that while we may not be the most gluttonous group she's led, we are the most adventurous.

As well as the traditional regional dishes we enjoy on our tour, we also sample modern Chinese cuisine. In Chengdu we eat a beautifully presented 23-course meal in a hushed, refined restaurant on a tree-lined street, with dishes starring ingredients such as fresh sea cucumber, truffles and the very special matsutake mushroom.

Another knockout dinner is at the famous Dragon Well Manor in Hangzhou. It's dark when we arrive, but the garden is lit with fairy lights and we can see beautiful plantings, stone lanterns, ornaments and little streams with bridges to cross. The manor is large and airy with eight private dining rooms, and the produce and meats are all locally grown and organic. We are wowed by simple dishes such as scrambled eggs with spring onions, a pancake stuffed with chrysanthemum leaves and simple cold white cut chicken with soy sauce. A soup of three-year-old duck has a rich flavour that would be perfectly at home in France. Today there are 26 dishes.

Once we hit Shanghai, we are officially in rice territory, but it still proves elusive. We eat dumplings at the renowned Din Tai Fung and since the Shanghainese delicacy hairy crab is in season, a whole meal is devoted to them. The crabs are small and it looks like picking the meat from them would be a lot of effort; luckily for us,

industrious chefs have done the hard work, and we enjoy numerous dishes starring their sweet meat and rich roe.

The regional differences in cuisine have continually surprised me throughout the trip – from rice versus wheat, to the hot and numbing flavours of the south contrasted with the plainer dishes of the north. And now in Shanghai, we discover that those in Beijing were correct when they described Shanghai cuisine as sweet.

Unfortunately, Rory and I were caught out on our last night there. The tour was over, Fuchsia was no longer ordering our food and we chose what were great sounding dishes but turned out to be mostly sweet. The meal had little balance and I was left feeling disappointed. Had we learnt nothing?

Despite this misstep, of course we had learnt a great deal. The 12 days of the tour were an incredible education, dispelling all my preconceived ideas about Chinese food. Dunlop shared her time and knowledge freely, and her enthusiasm for every new dish in every meal never waned.

And my initial fears proved unfounded – like me, the majority of my travelling companions had never been on an organised tour before, but we found happy common ground in our preoccupation with food. And as for my uncertainty about being able to eat 300 dishes? Well, there turned out to be considerably more than that and I tried every one. *

* Janice Kirkwood is the owner of Wellington's Astoria cafe. For more information about Fuchsia Dunlop and her tours, visit fuchsiadunlop.com







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ROTORUA

Hospitality Awards, and we watch him crank out coffee after coffee while quizzing him about his favourite spots to eat – after so many wins at the hospitality awards, he's now a judge, so we take his recommendations seriously.

Next door to Zippy is Be Rude Not To (berudenotto.co.nz), a delightfully retro cafe specialising in excellent food with an intolerance-friendly bent – most of the counter offerings are vegan, but they're so delicious you really wouldn't notice. Take a seat on the 70s boiled-wool orange sofa in the window and admire the murals dedicated to the Rotorua adventure tourism industry while enjoying a superlative hot chocolate. Afterwards. wander over a couple of blocks to Capers Epicurean (capers.co.nz), where you can have breakfast or shop for local honey, gluten-free products and many other specialty foods.

Around the corner under a lime green awning is Capizzi Pizzeria (capizzi.co.nz), which serves some of the best pizza we've had anywhere, and where you'll be greeted by friendly chef Deep Kumar. Kumar ended up in Rotorua because, despite being from

one of the world's most populous countries (India), he doesn't like crowds. His pizzas are to be treasured – the thinnest, crispiest bases around and high-quality toppings. You can sit down for a meal in the dining room and be transported to a hole-in-the-wall joint in Naples, or head out back to the pleasant beer garden. And if you're in a hurry, Kumar also sells his pizza by the slice to take away, something hard enough to find in Auckland, let alone Rotorua.

On Thursday nights you'd be forgiven for thinking Rotorua was observing curfew, but follow the fairy lights through the abandoned streets and vou'll reach the stretch of Tutanekai St where seemingly the city's entire population shows up at the night markets each week (facebook.com/rotoruanightmarket). The range of stalls rivals any other night market in the country, with everything from local fruit and veg (the queue is the length of the block) to burritos, Matariki lantern-making, Chinese dumplings and paella. The local Ciabatta Bakery is here too, selling many excellent baked goods

including the "world's longest hot dog", served on a 43cm ciabatta bun.

Pulling ourselves away from the tempting market offerings is made slightly easier by the promise of a visit to a locals' secret – Sabroso (sabroso.co.nz), a South Americanstyle restaurant run by Sarah Little and her husband John. Little was born in Venezuela, then moved to the US for work. What brought her to New Zealand? "Bush got re-elected and we needed a lifestyle change." The menu's full of delicious South American-inspired offerings, given Little's own signature spin. We begin with the rollos sabroso – fried tortillas stuffed with black beans, spinach and salsa – followed by the night's special, confit duck tostados with lashings of lime. There are also house-made hot sauces on every table – a warning on the side of the bottle counsels against using it as a bomb accelerant. Mention Sabroso to anyone in town and their eves will light up at the thought of one of Little's margaritas.

A couple of blocks towards Lake Rotorua is Eat Streat (rotoruanz.com/ eatstreat), Rotorua's dining precinct.





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Walkways at Te Puia's Whakarewarewa Geothermal Valley; specialty foods at Capers Epicurean; carvings at Te Puia; the brewing mural at Brew; a hangi feast at Te Puia; Zippy Central has a retro fitout and great coffee; top-notch pizza at Capizzi Pizzeria





Ingeniously, thermal heating pumps underfoot along the street to warm your toes in the colder months.

A newcomer to the precinct is Leonardo's Pure Italian (facebook. com/LeonardosPureItalian), a Rotorua institution that recently moved to much bigger premises on Eat Streat. Here, I manage to squeeze in a serving of Leonardo's famous tiramisu.

Next, we head for Brew (brewpub. co.nz), the headquarters of the award-winning Croucher Brewing Co, which is packed with locals on a Thursday evening. We sit beneath a mural illustrating the beer-brewing process while deciding on the perfect tasting paddle – as well as Croucher's portfolio, there are beers available from brewers throughout the country. If we weren't already replete with Latin American fare, this would be an ideal place to settle in for the evening with a plate of Cajun fried chicken and more great beer.

However, duty calls, and continuing the bar crawl we head next door to Ponsonby Rd (ponsonbyrd.co.nz), a cocktail bar opened earlier this year by Tamati Coffey and partner Tim Smith. Aiming to bring a bit of Ponsonby cool to Eat Streat, it's a red-velvet-curtainlined moody, glam space with an extensive cocktail list and lounge music four nights a week. We settle into a couple of red velvet chairs, sip on a Ponsonby Kwencher cocktail and reflect on a day well spent eating.

Rising early the next morning, we're rewarded with stunning views of the sun rising at Lake Tarawera. If you fancy a visit at a more civilised time of day, the Landing Cafe (taraweralanding.co.nz) sits right on the water's edge, and boasts fantastic views up the length of the lake. Following a local tip, we stop on the way back to town at Mistress of Cakes (mistressofcakes.co.nz) for a piece of fabulous white choc raspberry slice.

Next, we pull off the main road in search of local gem Ciabatta Bakery (ciabattabakery.co.nz), run by Swiss import Alex Burge and wife Sue. Having established themselves in Rotorua as a wholesale bakery (run out of their backyard, with Sue doing the deliveries), Burge set up the cafe for a bit of a change of pace. Since then though, the pair have given up

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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT Ciabatta Bakery's Alex Burge at his North Island table; a public art collection of bikes in the Village Green; comfortable sofas at Be Rude Not To; dumplings at the night market; an inlet near Okere Falls; Sabroso's John and Sarah Little with one of their famous margaritas; Ponsonby Rd bar







ABOVE The distinctive sign outside Okere Falls Store; Stratosfare restaurant

the wholesale side of their business to focus on the cafe full-time. The evidence of Burge's active imagination is everywhere – he made almost every bit of furniture in the place himself, including the workshop table in the shape of the North Island. Having trained as a patisserie chef in Switzerland, Burge has long since

mastered the classics, and these days likes to focus on more quirky offerings. When he was looking for something to sell at the night markets, he hit on the idea of the aforementioned world's longest hot dogs. Are they really? "I've done some research," he says. When a CrossFit gym opened next door, he turned his mind to paleo options, and now his "paleoccino" has a cult following. However eccentric his creations, from go-nuts (his take on the cronut) to banoffee coffee (several tradies stopped in during the course of our conversation to order these), Burge does them to the best of his ability. "It's like drawing," he says. "Some people are happy to stay with stick figures. We're not in the business of stick figures here." The 43cm hot dog is engineered with a thinner bun and lighter mayonnaise, so that despite its size, "you don't feel disgusting when you finish". Burge's enthusiasm is infectious, and he holds regular workshops around the table in the room next door ("the shape of the North Island is very conducive to conversation").

While a walk around the lake is a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon and work off some of your eating, the best way to appreciate the landscape of Rotorua is from about 200m up the side of Mt Ngongotaha. Volcanic Hills winery opened in 2009 (volcanichills.co.nz) and sits at the base of the mountain. After it's been bottled, the wine itself makes the scenic journey up the Skyline gondola to the tasting room at the top, in the old gondola station. Take a seat on the old chesterfield with a cheeseboard and let winemakers Sean Beer or Brent Park take you through a pleasingly friendly and informative tasting. The men met while working for large wineries, both in New Zealand and internationally, and their grapes are sourced from some of the oldest vines in the country's best wine regions. So why base the winery in Rotorua? "Why not?" Beer laughs.

If you've worked up an appetite for dinner (trip down the luge optional), head next door to the newly renovated Stratosfare (skyline.co.nz/rotorua). You'll be rewarded with those same stunning views along with a sleek

interior and numerous options to take your fancy at the smart buffet. The restaurant cleaned up at the recent Rotorua Hospitality Awards (including Best Waiter for my lovely waiter Te Aroha), and pretty much anything you might feel like is on offer – highlights include a dumpling bar, and Mangatu Gisborne wagyu beef, aged on site.

Heading out of town the next day. we still have a couple of key food stops to make – first at Patrick's Gold Star Bakery (89 Old Taupo Rd, 07-349 1959), the bakehouse home of Patrick Lam's award-winning pies (the shelves above the cash register positively heave with his trophies). Egg and bacon pie in hand, we continue north-east, sights set on the Okere Falls Store (okerefallsstore.co.nz). Hosting a Beer Fest each October (they even make their own souvenir steins). the store sells everything from fresh local produce to Spanish delicacies and craft beer (you can find the same goodies in the sister store back in town, attached to the Rotorua library).

Many things have traditionally put Rotorua on the map, from the hot pools, luge and gondola to the famous Polynesian Spa and the Redwood Forest on the outskirts of town – it's rewarding to discover that there's also a strong local food scene. *

Where to Stay

Fleeting visit? The Wai Ora resort is near the airport, offers transfers, and is also the sister company to Rotorua tourist favourite Hells Gate. The on-site restaurant, Mokoia, specialises in indigenous ingredients. waioraresort.co.nz

If you're after peace and quiet, head to the boutique Black Swan Lodge, a serene spot on the edge of Lake Rotorua that's just a five-minute drive from town. It shares an executive chef with Rotorua's Bistro 1284, and also boasts a helipad, swimming pool, beach and on-site spa. blackswanhotel.co.nz

If you want to be centrally based, the contemporary, pleasant Novotel is mere metres from Eat Streat and has rooms with views out to the lake. novotelrotorua.co.nz

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Auckland

Matterhorn

14.5/20 37 Drake St, Freemans Bay 09-929 2790, matterhorn.co.nz Dinner 7 days Mains \$28-38

The Auckland iteration of Wellington's iconic Matterhorn opened in March, and first impressions are that its climb to success is well under way. The Auckland site has the advantage of a much newer, bigger and better appointed space, thankfully free of the wind tunnel that defines arrival at the Wellington restaurant's Cuba St entrance.

Inside, the capacious, vault-like space that was Libertine has been transformed with defined dining alcoves, a mix of seating, sheepskin rugs and frosted glass partitions. The atmosphere is welcoming, with the layout ensuring a comfortable level of intimacy even when the restaurant is not so busy. Exposed brickwork and timber accents prevail and the high ceilings, rich brown tones and subdued lighting give the room a gentlemen's club meets high-end speakeasy feel. There's also an appealing bar area near the front entrance, leading on to an outdoor area that will no doubt be thronged with revellers over the warmer months.

The talented Sean Marshall is executive chef of both branches of Matterhorn and his years of experience and signature flair are both very much evident here. The highlight of our first courses was the duck Wellington – slow-cooked duck and liver sausage wrapped in a delicate brioche, with a pickled cherry sauce delivering the piquancy to balance the richness. My companion's John Dory was a little less successful – the fish was beautifully moist and fresh, but the consomme (poured at the table in

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Matterhorn's moody interior; the restaurant's duck Wellington; its dessert of cake, caramelised apples & cream

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a nice touch) was too salty, overwhelming the delicate flavour of the fish.

Next came a plate of pig with sour cabbage, parsnip, quince and gingerbread. The brooding dark colours, varied textures and inclusion of beautifully cooked brussels sprouts gave it plenty of wintry appeal on a cold night, and the pork was cooked perfectly. As a dish though, all the elements seemed slightly disparate, with nothing really tying them together and the sweet quince not quite balancing the sourness of the cabbage.

Another main of beef also created a conundrum. While the meat was tender and delicious, its jus was incredibly rich and went to battle with the accompanying, over-acidic slaw.

After these slight missteps, we were back on strong ground with desserts, which were a triumph. The lovely simplicity of a rum baba, set alight with lashings of Stolen Gold rum and offset by a quenelle of vanilla cream, was delicious. And my companion's caramelised apple dessert expertly combined flavours and textures with a tower of sweet apples, cake and light cream. Both these dishes had all the character of good home cooking, with the presentation and balance of genuinely clever restaurant food.

Our waiter had done his homework and was conversant with both the menu and the techniques involved. He deferred to the duty sommelier when it came to wine matches and while some of these were solid choices, a few weren't quite on point, with the suggested Marsanne proving much too light for the duck and pork.

For each of these minor malfunctions, there were also numerous flashes of great satisfaction at Matterhorn. The room works very well and I look forward to an occasion when I might use the stunning private dining room. The wine service needs a splash more polish, but the wine list itself is strong. And the menu is a winner, delivering touches of extravagance, a pleasing homage to the classics and the artfulness of design. A couple of glitches with seasoning and the overuse of on-trend fermented ingredients can easily be put to right, and our overall impression was of well conceived, strongly grounded dishes. This is clearly a restaurant with good bones and I am certain that with a bit of fine tuning, it will ascend to its lofty promise. KERRY TYACK





422 Mt Eden Rd, Mt Eden 09-638 7236, molten.co.nz Dinner Mon-Sat Mains \$28-\$32

It's been a few years since I've been to Molten and the restaurant's been busy. Last time I was there, it was a simple, wooden-floored room with a bit of dark leather and wood. Perfectly nice, but just a little forgettable. Molten mark two now sports distressed concrete, lots of very 2015 trailing greenery, clever panelled partitioning and several stylish banquettes. It felt a bit like not seeing a friend for a few years (different countries. different cities, life), then catching up to discover they'd dyed their hair, shed 10kg and suddenly looked 10 years younger than me. The back courtyard has also had a bit of a spruce up, and is now home to a roasting pit. The overall effect of all the spaces is rather glossy and urban, and clearly the locals approve – on a recent night, it was packed with happy punters.

Interestingly, as the space has become more modern, the menu's taken a simpler tack (though arguably that's also very modern). Prices have been pared back, with most mains now coming in under \$30, and there's a decent list of pizzas along with the comfort-foodleaning bistro dishes. Additionally, if you're a group of four or more you can get greedy and opt for the "feasting"



menu" (including spit-roasted pig or lamb cooked in the courtyard), served on platters for you to help yourselves from/trade knife blows over crackling.

Molten co-owner Sven Nielsen's killer wine cellar survived the makeover, which is good news, laden as it is with interesting local and offshore labels, at some very reasonable prices (though he couldn't help himself from also including a "wine geek" list with plenty to entice). The beer offering is similarly thoughtful, with a solid range of great craft brews. Critically, the waitstaff know their way around the list and are happy to advise.

A salt cod risotto with mascarpone and soft-cooked egg was great – rice nicely al dente, the rich egg yolk mingling happily with the creamy rice and little flakes of salty fish. Another starter of eggplant parmigiana was presented as a stack of fried crumbed discs of eggplant and smoky cheese, on a bed of a flavourful, thick tomato sauce.

In mains, a pool of braised lentils and tomatoes was home to a generous portion of slow-cooked tender lamb shoulder, topped with pea puree and

ABOVE, FROM LEFT

Molten's interior, complete with trailing greenery; the restaurant's passionfruit semifreddo, meringue & curd with sesame praline



a glistening white anchovy. The flavours were hearty and comforting, though maybe a bit of contrasting texture would have been nice. That said, we found crunch in a side of deep-fried broccoli – bright green al dente florets inside an excellently crisp rice flour batter.

A huge portion of pork belly was possibly a little too big, if there is such a thing, but came topped with a large piece of crackling, which you can never have too much of, as well as some veg, a wodge of apple jelly, and lots of savoury jus. All was well, aside from the belt notches.

Obviously we didn't need dessert after all this, but in the interests of research we pushed on. They proved slightly posher in plating than the savoury courses, but still very appealing. A poached pear half came with a brilliantly wobbly caramelly maple panna cotta, a splodge of dulce de leche and crumbs of olive oil cake, while a lovely tile of passionfruit semifreddo was scattered with pieces of meringue, little dollops of passionfruit curd and toffee.

Molten's a buzzy local serving crowdpleasing food cooked with care. Having rediscovered its charms, I won't leave it so long between visits. **SARAH WALL**

Phil's Kitchen

15.5/20

479 New North Rd, Kingsland 09-849 7741; philskitchen.co.nz Lunch Fri-Sat, dinner Tues-Sat Mains \$36-\$39 (three-course lunch \$35)

An escalating flu, the coldest night of the year and general sleep deprivation: reasons not to go out. But. Warm bread rolls caressed by rosemary and olive oil, unctuous layers of dauphinoise potato, and a lick of sharp lemon curd in a sweet cloud of meringue: reasons to rejoice that you hardened up and left the sofa.

I'm late to the Phil's Kitchen fan-club party, but now that I've arrived, I plan on hanging out there as much as possible. Chef-owner Phil Clark is enthusiastic and hugely talented. Together with French partner and maitre d' Marine Peyregne, he opened this charming sliver of a restaurant in Kingsland around four months ago and has been feeding a stream of enraptured diners ever since.

You probably won't be surprised to hear that I'm one of them. A black bowl containing a smear of golden onion puree, toasted nuggets of buckwheat,



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Phil's Kitchen's lemon curd

& Black Doris meringue; chef Phil Clark; gurnard with beetroot PHIL'S KITCHEN, JASON CREAGHAN; EGMONT ST EATERY, DAVID WHITE

a quivering soft-cooked egg and a twist of green shoots arrives at our table, and a velvety potato puree is poured over it. It's perfectly balanced – nutty, sweet and savoury notes mingle harmoniously, while the crunch of the buckwheat neatly offsets the gorgeous rich textures of the potato, onion and egg. Across the table, there's a strip of pork belly topped with steal-me-now crisp crackling, little muscatel grapes, slivers of hazelnut and a yellow swoop of a savouryish puree.

Clark's big on these swoops – in lesser hands, they might seem a bit gimmicky, but his Nike-like ticks of flavour ground the bistro dishes, reinforcing themes and adding saucy pleasure. A main of beautifully cooked gurnard gets a swoop of beetroot puree, which turns out to be an ideal partner for the sweet fish. Ditto crisp leaves of rosemary, which add a fantastic herbal savouriness.

His plating's strong and the plates are gorgeous – there's currently a pleasing trend of using artisan-made plates in New Zealand restaurants, and the hand-crafted backgrounds here, made by Peter Collis, make a great backdrop for the good-looking food.

Another main serves up smoked duck with dots of preserved Black Doris plum, red cabbage, tiny charred brussels sprouts and a swoop of savoury, nutty umaminess. We also order a side of potato dauphinoise which comes in a cute little black casserole dish, its lid to one side revealing layers of oozy, rich potato magic.

The space itself provides a neutral backdrop for all this aesthetically pleasing carry-on. It's actually two small rooms, the front one dominated by a bar/service area, with a total of just 24 seats. It's simply furnished, with wooden floors, white-painted exposed brick and a few abstract paintings. Along with the minimalism, there are nice details including comfy, creamupholstered armchairs, a charcoal banquette, and scalloped-edged napkins that feel pleasingly bespoke.

The wine list is fairly brief, but so is the menu, and there's enough there to work with the dishes. It's also very much on the neighbourhood-bistro theme in its pricing, with nothing over \$70 (bar a French bubbly that sneaks in at \$76), and every option available by the bottle or glass. The staff, under the lead of the knowledgeable Peyregne, are happy to help with matches, and are well versed on the intricacies of

Clark's dishes, which is no mean feat, particularly as the menu changes daily.

That said, Clark's cinnamon doughnuts are exempted from the revolving door policy that governs the rest of the dishes. This is a Very Good Thing given the lightness of the dough encasing a dark caramel sauce, offset by a quenelle of chantilly cream and a sprinkling of salty maltodextrin powder.

On a cold night, the lemon curd and Black Doris meringue conjured up sunshine, the sweet-sharp flavours of the curd and plum brilliant against a cloud of Italian meringue.

Clark and Peyregne spent a good deal of their free time over winter building a deck and garden out the back – the plan is to put an extra 20 seats out there, plus a kitchen garden to supply the restaurant with herbs and shoots. The prospect of enjoying Clark's food outdoors on a balmy evening is immensely appealing – and guaranteed to entice you away from the sofa. SARAH WALL

Wellington

Egmont Street Eatery

15-21 Dixon St (entrance off Egmont St), City 04-801 6891, egmontstreet.co.nz Breakfast & lunch 7 days, dinner Wed-Sun Mains \$18-40

Egmont Street Eatery is the latest spot to open in Wellington's laneway zone. While Dixon St is being slowly overcome by cheap food joints and bargain stores, the nearby alleyways are being colonised by artisan bakers, chocolatiers, brewers and pizza makers. A candlemaker still operates in this neighbourhood and it surely won't be too long before a butcher sets up their block. It's about as hip as deliberately un-hip Wellington gets.

The small, slickly designed Eatery is the work of Simon Pepping, who has turned a former carpark into an all-day eating and drinking spot as well as a home for his successful catering business, The Catering Studio. It's been open only a few months, but has already generated a nice buzz. This means that, even early on a midweek night, the place is full. We perch on stools at the kitchen servery – a lofty position to survey the room.

The Eatery is open all day, and the dinner menu is pleasingly to the point, with a handful of snacky starters and a small number of very reasonably priced and generously proportioned mains, some designed to share. The drinks list is rather longer, with many wines available by the carafe, glass or bottle.

My dinner companions decide they don't want to share mains, but we compromise by ordering easily divisible

BELOW, FROM TOP Egmont St Eatery's head chef Daniel Paul Smith (left) and chef-owner Simon Pepping; panfried tarakihi with carrot puree





RESTAURANTS

starters. The charcuterie platter delivers silky duck parfait, pork rillettes, candied nuts, dukkah, pickled vegetables and some crisp bread. Oh, and a small pile of cured meat. It's a fine exposition of the caterer's arts, and a truly shareable platter, but the end result seems somehow less than the sum of its parts. I'd prefer a lot of a little than a little of a lot – a slab of the excellent duck parfait and a few pickles would do nicely.

The boneless chicken wings are light, crisp and – unfortunately – almost unpalatably salty, even when anointed with dollops of kimchi mayo. A good incentive to drink more beer, perhaps (and here Egmont St does well, with local craft brews from Panhead, ParrotDog and Garage Project on tap). The carapace of the fluffy pork and potato croquettes suffers from the same salty issues.

But perhaps this was a fault of ordering – or, as my husband puts it, "it turns out you can have too much deep-fried salty goodness". His main course of salt and pepper chicken (meant to be shared) is delicious, but more than fills his fried food quota for the next month and he admits ordering a side of hand-cut fries, plus a bowl of fried brussels sprouts for the table, is a mistake. (We still eat them; they are excellent.) My salad of pork and squid does feature fried squid, but is fortunately also loaded with Asian herbs and fresh, punchy flavours. The most successful dish of the night turns out to be the one with no deep-frying – a simple but lovely plate of panfried tarakihi on a silky carrot puree, with wilted greens.

A chocolate and rhubarb creme brulee, accompanied by a neat pile of ruby rhubarb logs, seems almost refreshing after the excesses of our earlier dishes. But the marmalade and whisky bread and butter pudding is the real dessert winner, with a crisp exterior, soft interior and little nuggets of caramelised fruit.

Egmont St Eatery is a worthy member of the laneways community and if I lived in the neighbourhood I'd visit often. It's "cool", but not achingly so, and service is very attentive and friendly. Next time I'll just be more careful with how much deep-fried goodness I order. **LUCY CORRY**

Hillside Kitchen & Cellar

15/20

241 Tinakori Rd, Thorndon 04-473 7140, hillsidekitchen.co.nz Breakfast, lunch & dinner Tues-Sat Multi-choice set menus \$55-\$65

As a follow-up to the resounding success of his debut business, Wellington's first dedicated Ramen Shop, Asher Boote has opted for altogether riskier territory. From the icy wastes of the Arctic, he brings Wellington a taste of the "new Nordic kitchen", serving startling combinations of local and foraged food as degustation menus.

The contemporary twist is that you eat it in the tiny 26-seater phone box that formerly housed Charlie Bill, surroundings so modest that they make for correspondingly very moderate prices: \$65 for four courses, plus an

extra \$35 for the bespoke, deliciously obscure wine matches.

Like the casual joints serving fine food I noticed recently in Amsterdam, Boote and co-owner and sommelier Jules van Cruysen's guiding concept is bistronomy: gastronomy served in a bistro setting.

The project brings to fruition Boote's experience of new Nordic cuisine, acquired five years ago when, recognising the similarities between New Zealand and Scandinavia, he went to work at Bloom in the Park in southern Sweden, just across the water from Copenhagen's legendary Noma.

As such, whatever can be served from the wild is from the wild. The menu evolves constantly, but you may encounter wild fallow deer with scented aloe gel, or wild sheep served with beef fat dripping mixed though mash. They forage their baby nasturtium leaves from the Thorndon hillside, out the back.

Boote is not beyond the odd bit of humour, as in the "ghost" n'duja which flavours his appetiser of lamb's sweetbreads, along with fresh herbs (nasturtium, fennel, coriander, parsley). You can taste this chilli-hot Italian pork sausage, but search as you may you cannot see it. It turns out that the n'duja in fact deglazes the pan in which the sweetbreads are fried.

Japanese techniques come into play with a starter of octopus, tender yet tasty, which is served with andouille sausage and batons of celeriac, subtly dressed with what amounts to a remoulade (mayo, mustard, lemon).

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CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
Hillside Kitchen & Cellar's
walnut, cauliflower & quince
dessert; the restaurant's
interior; Salty Pidgin's
sardine with artichokes,
red onion & olives

Nothing is wasted: the butter for the complimentary bread is churned in-house, and the leftover buttermilk is then used to briefly marinate raw button mushrooms, which greatly accentuates their woodsy flavour.

"Salmon, chicken, dashi," my brother read aloud from the menu. "Salmon and chicken – together?" It had been a long and tiring work day. "It's an avant garde



menu," I had to explain. As it happened, I did order this 38-degree, sous vide salmon and was delighted, especially by the way it mirrored the creamy richness of the accompanying quenelle of chicken mousseline. A small plunger pot filled with dashi, flavoured with lemon, coriander stalks, bay, coriander seed, fennel and ginger, was poured at the table by the warm and friendly waiter.

By the time he received his main course of crusty pork jowl with kale, leek and four types of mushroom fried in pork fat, my brother had been well and truly won over.

He even managed to overcome preconceptions and enjoy his dessert – a walnut cake with cauliflower buttermilk icing and sous vide quince.

The dish descriptions on the menu are kept deliberately minimal, so as not to ruin the surprise. "Chocolate, milk" turned out to be a plate of honeycomb chocolate with milk done three ways – as dulce de leche, as a wafer made from dehydrated milk foam, and as a creamy whipped rosette.

While some diners might be a little challenged by dishes such as marinated raw herring with pickled vegetables and poached quail's egg, anybody with even moderately sophisticated tastes will recognise this repertoire for what it is – exciting, cutting-edge and a welcome addition to Wellington. DAVID BURTON

Salty Pidgin Bar & Bistro

14/20

5 Todman St, Brooklyn 04-385 9197, saltypidgin.com Breakfast Sat-Sun, lunch Thurs-Sun, dinner Tues-Sun Mains \$27-34

Four years ago, while struggling to get a toe-hold on Wellington's property ladder, I fell in love with a house in Brooklyn. It had harbour views, underfloor heating, all-day sun and a shed out the back just screaming for gentrification. It also had a queue of would-be buyers, all of whom had far more money than I did. Reality made

RESTAURANTS

me reluctantly give up my dreams of living on Sugarloaf Rd and life moved on. I'd forgotten all about that house until a cold winter's night, when we were cosily ensconced at the Salty Pidgin, listening to live music after being well fed and watered. "Damnation," I thought, "This could have been our local!"

The city side of Brooklyn has always been sought-after but the recent transformation of a fairly average pub into a chic-but-not-terrifying neighbourhood bistro must be doing great things for local real estate. Chef Amy Gillies and partner John-Paul Henderson opened the Salty in January, reinvigorating and refreshing the building that was once home to Lois Daish's much-loved Brooklyn Cafe and Grill. They want it to be a neighbourly affair, where locals can pop in for an after-work drink and stay on for dinner, or relax over a leisurely weekend lunch.

The menu is designed accordingly bar snacks, small plates and Turkish-style pide pizzas making for informal eating. But make no mistake, this is no nachos and nuggets joint. This is one of Wellington's loftier suburbs after all, and the drinks list (heavy on craft beer, interesting wine and some nicely chosen cocktails) reflects the cosmopolitan tastes of its residents. Bar snacks are correspondingly posh and include half a quail served with slaw, sardines with gremolata toast and moules-frites. Even if it's not on your way home from work I'd definitely recommend trudging up Ohiro Rd for a plateful of the crispy cauliflower with harissa mayo. This must be one of the best bar snacks ever made - and it's only \$6. We hoovered them up.

If you're looking for something more than a snack to soak up your Negroni, entree-sized plates are the logical next step. Fat, butterflied sardines laid on a piquant bed of artichoke hearts, black olives and red onion were pleasantly salty and oily, while slices of pig's head sausage – richly flavoured and almost moussey in texture – were lifted by a puddle of pickled cucumbers.

The small diner at our table was very happy with her thin-crust, oval-shaped tomato and three-cheese pizza. More "adult" toppings include roast pork shoulder, grilled artichoke and prawn with harissa – and they do a breakfast one on weekends that sounds tempting.

Unfortunately, after such a good start, our main courses were a little disappointing. My duck breast with

grilled broccoli, pearl barley, garlic and balsamic suffered because the broccoli was a tad overcooked and seemed more boiled than grilled, though the duck was perfectly pink and the barley had the right amount of chew. Across the table, his "free-range chicken breast, crushed swede, carrot and celeriac, crispy prosciutto and herbs" was also let down by the slightly mushy vegetable component. The chicken, however, was succulent and juicy. A side order of chunky potatoes in spiced butter was very, very good.

We didn't really need dessert, but the four-strong list was compelling. We opted for the passionfruit parfait with coconut and candied popcorn, plus the liquorice cheesecake with caramelised pineapple and chocolate. The latter was particularly good, with the liquorice cutting through velvety cream cheese. The prices are also refreshing – when did you last see a dessert under \$10?

All things considered, the Salty Pidgin is probably the best thing to happen to Brooklyn in a long while. Service is charming, friendly and very polished, the ambience is delightful and the drinks are good. Most importantly, the food is smart and mostly well-executed. I do wish we'd bought that house. **LUCY CORRY**

BELOW & RIGHT 50 Bistro's interior; the restaurant's Bombe Alaska 2015

Christchurch

50 Bistro

14/20 50 Park Terrace, City 03-371 0250, thegeorge.com/50-bistro Breakfast, lunch & dinner 7 days Mains \$23-\$39

Christchurch's boutique George Hotel, perched on the edge of Hagley Park, has two restaurants. They are stacked one on top of the other – two layers of lighted windows and silhouetted diners. It's upstairs and downstairs, literally.





50 BISTRO, DEAN KOZANIC

RESTAURANTS

In the rarefied air on top is Pescatore. It has a chef's hat, serves only dinner and delivers intricate, innovative dishes at corresponding prices. But tonight, on a cold, wintry evening, we're downstairs at 50 Bistro, the casual cousin, which works hard all day to fill the rest of the gaps.

The new menu has just been launched and the dishes are described in ornate detail, with words like espuma and gelee scattered about. We suspect more than a little fine-dining influence filtering down through that ceiling. Along with the fancy stuff though, there's a pleasing local produce theme.

The welcome is swift and smooth but things get a bit wobbly early on, which is partly our fault. We seize on a young woman pouring the water, and ask about menu ingredients and wine matches. We find out later she is brand new and is looking forward to her "induction". Meanwhile, she recommends "probably a white wine" to go with scallops and we get served duck parfait instead of the scallops. However, she's swapped out along the way and the service is polished and excellent for the rest of the evening.

The wine list has a good, if fairly

pedestrian, selection by the glass. It's surprisingly streamlined, given the vast wine list that I know is offered upstairs.

Our starters show a good appreciation of flavours. A salad of spinach, riesling-poached pear, candied walnuts and blue cheese is a classic combination and arrives with everything as it should be.

The scallops are more interesting. A trio is served garnished with tiny flowers on a bed of pea puree with slow-cooked pork belly and a round, brittle slice of what tastes like salty fried salami. Nice, but I'm supposed to have smoked eel. I query it. The new waitress says the smoked eel is an "essence" thing; a flavour. She says it's not the slices. I leave it as one of life's unsolved mysteries and apply myself to eating.

For mains, we plump for the local "Canterbury" offerings of lamb and duck. The lamb is grilled thick slices of rump and braised shank meat croquette, with smoked potato, peas and a rich sauce.

The duck is a crisp confit leg, paired with slices of pink breast meat that have a wonderful hit of smoky flavour. Some poached cherries make a great sweet complement, and there's another

appropriately rich sauce. An excellent side dish of Oamaru brussels sprouts cooked in duck fat with bacon delivers a dose of homely comfort food.

Desserts show a level of complexity. Bombe Alaska 2015 is layers of a soft pistachio base, a very cold "lemon chiboust cream", raspberry coulis and a sprinkle of pop rocks. It's topped by rectangular slices of lime meringue and the whole is garnished by more meringue. It's clever and enjoyable.

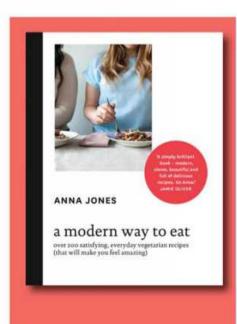
An apple strudel comes deconstructed with caramelised filo shards, stewed apple cubes, bright green blobs of Granny Smith gel, a somewhat bland quenelle of vanilla ice cream and some crumble. It's all very pretty and tasty, but as the outside temperature slipped below zero, I couldn't help thinking that a constructed slab of strudel would be nice.

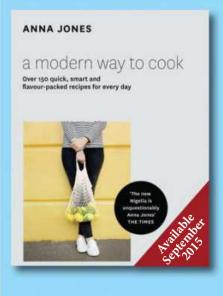
On the whole, we enjoyed our evening. The room was warm, the service engaging and the food well executed. Personally, I'd like a little less fancy and a little more hearty, but The George is presumably pitching the bistro at the discerning travellers who stay on-site, and I'm sure they're very happy. EWAN SARGENT *

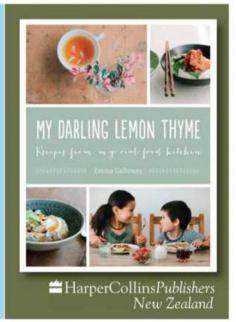
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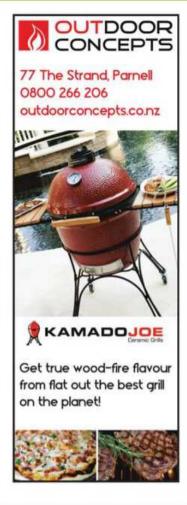


















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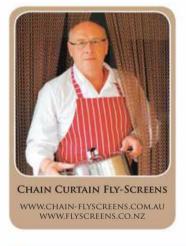
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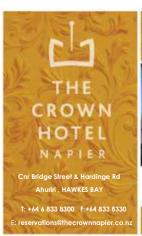














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Renowned British company Dualit has launched a new Auto jug and toaster in a stylish copper finish as part of its Classic range. The launch is part of the company's 70th anniversary celebrations – Dualit toasters have been hand-built in the UK since the 1940s and are a kitchen essential. Both the jug and toaster are fully serviceable with interchangeable elements. For further information, visit awardappliances.co.nz



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Art of the matter

If you're visiting Melbourne this spring, don't miss the Masterpieces from the Hermitage exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria. Showing until 8 November, there are more than 400 works from Catherine the Great's personal collection, amassed during her 34-year reign. **ngv.vic.gov.au**

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A CUISINE ADVERTISING PROMOTION



History keepers

Whitestone has joined up with Te Papa's Great War Exhibition to create a limited-edition commemorative cheese, honouring the centenary of WWI. The exhibition receives \$2 from each Brothers in Arms cheese sold. Available to buy at Te Papa's Wellington cafe, or direct from Whitestone, whitestonecheese.com



Roval watch

Marisco Vineyard's award-winning Kings Series range now has a smart new look. You'll find the same great wines packaged in subtly different, stylishly updated bottles in your local LK and Liquorland stores. marisco.co.nz



Drive time

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Keep cool

If you re planning your dream kitchen, look no further than Fisher & Paykel's new 900mm Slide-In refrigerator range. Effortlessly at home in any space, it uses ActiveSmart™ Foodcare technology to help keep your food fresher for longer. Available this spring. Model shown RS90AU1 Ice & Water French Door. fisherpaykel.com



The best bacon

From breakfast to dinner, bacon is a hugely versatile fridge stand-by. Hellers Danish Free Range Bacon is made with hundreds of years of expertise and is recommended by the Danish Animal Welfare Society. It's manuka smoked and deliciously crispy when cooked, making it the perfect addition to your shopping basket. hellers.co.nz/Danish



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Kitchen master

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Sweet suggestion

Whether you want to bake for a work morning tea, children's birthday party or just to treat your family on the weekend, *Cuisine* baking writer Alice Arndell has fantastic suggestions in her new book, *Bake Me Home*. Including plenty of trouble-shooting tips and delicious ideas for all occasions, it's the perfect gift for both beginner and expert bakers. harpercollins.co.nz

Shower chic

For the ultimate in bathroom style, opt for the ShowerTablet Select 700. Featuring a generous storage shelf, it's fitted directly to the water connections coming from your wall. As with all German-made Hansgrohe products, it displays both functionality and elegance, making it ideal focal point for your bathroom.

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CREDITS INDEX COVER Thomas Loft dishes (The Home Store). **QUICK SMART** page 50 Broste Satin cutlery (May Time Marketing): marble background (Artedomus). **SAVING GRACE** Props supplied are listed. page 60 Others are privately owned Trestle table (Arkade); stools and ceramic platter (Miss Changy); slate board, black Arkade arkade.co.nz ceramic platter, small black ceramic bowl, Artedomus artedomus.co.nz Duralex glasses, napkins and marble salt dish **Emily Siddell** (Tessuti); Heath Ceramics green ceramic vase, emily.steve@xtra.co.nz and serving fork, wine glasses and chowder **Everyday Needs** bowls (Everyday Needs); black vases, blue glazed ceramic bowl and salt dish (Emily everyday-needs.com **Factory Ceramics** Siddell); black jet rocks (Jewels & Gems); factoryceramics.co.nz black sand plates, platters, small dish and spoon (Houston Design Co); Gidon Bing side Father Rabbit fatherrabbit.com **Hayden Youlley** plates with chickpea puree (Simon James Design); stemless wine glasses (Everyday haydenyoulley.com **Houston Design** Needs and Monmouth Glass Studio); houstondesignco.bigcartel.com blue plates (Father Rabbit). Japanese Lifestyle **STALKS THIS WAY** japaneselifestyle.co.nz page 72 **Jewels & Gems** jewelsandgems.co.nz Thomas Sunny Day and Cornish Blue dinner **Keep Resin Homewares** plates (The Studio of Tableware); Beatnik keepresin.com.au paint background (Resene). **May Time Marketing FLASH IN THE PAN** maytime.co.nz **Monmouth Glass Studio** page 80 monmouthglassstudio.co.nz Paper Series coloured rim plates and bowls, Mud Australia mudaustralia.com and white dinner plates and pasta bowls **Peonies Home and Living** (Hayden Youlley); handmade white glazed peoniesofmartinborough.co.nz dinner plate and rustic cheese platter board PHOTOGRAPHY, STEVE BROWN; STYLING, KRISTINE DURAN-THIESSEN Resene resene.co.nz (Susan Simonini); dark grey and birchwood **Simon James Design** placemats (KeepResin Homewares); small simonjamesdesign.com flared slate and citrus bowls (Mud Australia). Smith & Caughey's smithandcaugheys.co.nz **SWEET SPOT** Susan Simonini page 88 susansimonini.com.au Wonki Ware plates (Peonies Home and Tessuti shop.tessuti.co.nz Living); small dishes (Factory Ceramics); The Home Store Blue Night paint background (Resene). thehomestore.co.nz The Studio of Tableware **COOKING FOR 2** thestudio.co.nz page 94 Vera Wang Simplicity Indigo plate (Smith & Caughey's).

WHAT TO DO WITH

Leaf dishes (Japanese Lifestyle); background marble (Arte Domus).

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You may not have married a chef.

But you might just fall in love with a cook.



AN INITIATIVE FROM NZ PORK TO GIVE MUMS A NIGHT OFF

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cold truths

The contents of our fridges reveal a lot more about us than we realise, says **SIMON DAY**.

ince I was a child I've been hypnotised by the glow of the fridge. One hand on the door, one hanging at my side, my eyes dart around its shelves. While my own fridge provides plenty to contemplate, what I'm really fascinated by is other people's. Your fridge reflects your life; it represents who you are. Your health and wealth are revealed in its contents. It is a social canvas for the way we live our lives.

I find myself staring into the fridges of near-strangers, wondering if they're an Asian fusion or modern European household. A friend's parents never let me forget the day I first met them when, immediately after shaking their hands, I somehow found myself in front of their fridge, peering curiously at their mustard selection. I also judge people on what lives in and out of their fridge. I keep eggs out – three minutes is my perfect soft boil; two minutes my perfect poach and refrigerated eggs throw off my timing. I also keep a big piece of butter at room temperature, the perfect consistency for spreading on bread. And naturally I let my tomatoes ripen on the bench.

The first thing I do when I go home to my parents' place is open the fridge. It reminds me of my childhood, when I would come home from school and plot my afternoon tea (still my favourite meal of the day) in front of the fridge. There will be sugar snap peas from Mum's garden, and always a jar of her brilliant chilli, lime and sesame oil dressing. There'll be a piece of salmon - a family history of heart disease means Mum will prepare red meat for everyone else and fish for herself. In my parents' fridge you will also find my father's car keys, sitting on top of tomorrow's lunch, ensuring it goes to work with him.

The top shelf of my own fridge is full of condiments: artisan harissa, Kewpie mayonnaise and burnt butter from Orphan's Kitchen. So when I first stuck my snobby Auckland nose into my mother-in-law-to-be's fridge (and it is very much *her* fridge),



Your fridge represents who you are. Your health and wealth are revealed in its contents. It is a social canvas for the way we live our lives

I was alarmed at the budget brands I discovered there. I questioned what I was signing up for. However, she's an incredible cook and her homemade hollandaise is a formidable replacement for burnt butter. It turns out it's really about what you do with your fridge contents, rather than who produced them in the first place.

My flatmate David doesn't like to let things go to waste. Recently, he couldn't even let the heat in the griddle pan dissipate unused, quickly slicing some onions to gently soften them in the pan's residual heat. Our fridge is full of leftovers. It's a habit he inherited from his mother. David doesn't believe in use-by dates, either. He decants the milk from its plastic carton into an old-school glass bottle. While very retro-chic, it reduces decisions on its health to the sniff test. And things last a lot longer in David's mind than they do in health and safety theory.

The last piece of my maternal grandfather lives in my grandmother's freezer. He was an amazing gardener, and his ashes are scattered in the fertile soil of his vege patch where I spent hours planting zucchini and lettuces. In Gran's freezer are the last chillies from his garden; a bag of bright red cryogenically frozen memories.

Last year, a close friend's mother was dying of cancer. When I'd go round to visit him and open his fridge, it was so crammed the light could barely break through. It was stacked high with containers of stews and soup, from slow-cooked beef cheeks to homemade stock. Cooking had become Ben's therapy. It kept him occupied, his mum eating as well as she could and the family fed. His fridge was filled with his grief.

Fridges are a whiteware window on the culture of food. In France, fridges stink. Cheese is the boss of the fridge. Creamy bries try to creep out from beneath lidded porcelain domes with blue patterning.

In my youth, I worked as a nanny (a manny) for a Parisian family for a year, when I drank €2 bottles of red wine and took the metro with baguettes tucked under my arm. In the fridge of my tiny chambre de bonne, hidden in the roof of a Haussmann building, there was always a white cylinder of goat's cheese, buckwheat galettes and a piece of entrecote steak wrapped in wax paper tied up with string.

In 1826 French lawyer, politician and gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin wrote, "Dis-moi ce que tu manges, je te dirai ce que tu es." – tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are". In 2015, I say, let me look in your fridge and I'll tell you who you are. The cold fluorescent light shines into the corners of life that your Instagram posts will never reveal. *

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